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A MISSION OF THE SPIRIT

A. R. WINNINGTON INGRAM

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A Mission of the Spirit

By the
Right Rev.
Arthur F. Winnington Ingram, D.D.
Lord Bishop of London

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Preface

READERS of the following pages must remember two or three points about the sermons and addresses which they contain. They were all delivered, except the last sermon, without reference to any notes; if, therefore, the sentences appear at times involved or confused, it is not the fault of the excellent shorthand reporter, but of the preacher.

Secondly, they were delivered in a series of churches in the course of the Mission in North London during Lent, 1906, and therefore the points made in previous sermons had to be summarised when the next church was reached, to enable the hearers to follow the course of the message of the Mission. This involves a certain amount of repetition.

Thirdly, they must perforce appear comparatively cold and dead when out of connection with those vast and silent congregations which followed the Mission from the beginning to the end, and especially when disconnected from that united and earnest intercession in the strength of which the whole effort was carried on from first to last. I think that most of us will remember as the most touching part of the Mission the Litany of the HOLY GHOST, sung kneeling, and followed by prayer for all those in sickness, sadness, perplexity, or sin.

School of Theology
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But still, with all these necessary drawbacks, the following pages are a faithful transcript of the message of the Mission. On Sunday mornings or evenings, as the case might be, the *work* of the HOLY SPIRIT was considered (1) in convicting of sin, (2) in leading us, (3) in dwelling within us, (4) in empowering us, (5) in comforting, (6) in raising us from the dead.

On Sunday afternoons, in the great gatherings of men which were a special feature of the Mission, we considered ways of resisting the HOLY SPIRIT: (1) Lust, in conquering which in ourselves and in the world we found one of the chief things men could do for JESUS CHRIST; (2) Indifference; (3) Drink and Gambling; (4) Doubt; (5) Pride. At Islington, the service at the Chapel Royal on the same day prevented the men's meeting.

On the week-day evening in each week, after the questions were answered, we considered special fruits of the SPIRIT: (1) Love; (2) Joy; (3) Peace; (4) Long-suffering; (5) Goodness; (6) Self-control.

With this skeleton in their minds, readers will have no difficulty in following the course of the Mission; and if the perusal of these simple sermons and addresses stirs up anything like the fresh realisation of the presence and power of the HOLY SPIRIT which the preaching of them did in him who was allowed to preach them, they will not have been printed in vain.

A. F. LONDON.

FEAST OF ST. PHILIP AND
ST. JAMES, 1906.

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HIGHGATE

SUNDAY MORNING

I

A SPECIAL MISSION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

"This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by My SPIRIT, saith the Lord of Hosts."—ZECH. iv. 6.

IN Lent last year we held, in the West End of London, a Mission, of which you may have heard, and we took as our motto "JESUS of Nazareth passeth by." Although it is now twelve months ago, I still have vividly before my eyes not only the immense congregations, on week nights as well as on Sundays, but the intense and earnest look of those congregations. I confess that the astonishing response to the Mission rebuked my faith. From the very beginning there was, during each week, a pouring in of doubts and difficulties and questions, by letter, to be answered at the next service. There was much prayer in West London for that Mission. JESUS of Nazareth, in the power of the SPIRIT, did pass through us and was among us, in parish after parish. Hundreds, I know, thanked GOD for the message He spoke to their souls. And now that we come on to North London,

on this opening Sunday I do beg you devout, earnest Christian people here to pray most earnestly for a blessing upon North London. It is no human power, it is no human eloquence, that is of the slightest use; "not by might, nor by power" do these Missions go home to souls. I plead for the earnest prayer of everyone who prays at all that from this morning right on to the service on Easter Day there may be poured down the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, who alone can melt the frozen, warm the chill. And I plead for the same spiritual response in North London as we met in the West End. From this opening service onwards I come to you as your Bishop and your friend. I do this work, in addition to almost overwhelming official work, because I want to be the chief missioner of this diocese, and to be among you as a true shepherd, not merely a highly-placed official. "Be to the flock of Christ a shepherd, not a wolf; feed them, devour them not. Hold up the weak, bring again the outcast, heal the sick"—that is what a Bishop is told to do in the commission given him at his consecration. And therefore I ask you to receive me in North London in the spirit in which I come, and to give me, from the very opening day, your spiritual confidence, which I assure you I shall respect. It is impossible to answer all the letters that are sent in, but I will answer at the next service all the questions that you ask me during the week;* and if you give me that spiritual response, then, as I go on in North London from week to week, I shall feel that I am dealing with real difficulties, real troubles, real temptations, speaking to real people who have brought me the real secrets of their souls; and so the HOLY SPIRIT can do His work with more force amongst us.

* See p. 23.

And you notice I take for the motto of the North London Mission a different verse from that which I took for the West London Mission—not "JESUS of Nazareth passeth by," but this one: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My SPIRIT, saith the Lord of Hosts." The Mission of North London is to be a special Mission of the HOLY SPIRIT. And, although the idea is different, the difference is not as great as might at first appear, because JESUS of Nazareth can only pass by in the power of the SPIRIT. It is the SPIRIT that takes of CHRIST and shows Him to us. And, on the other hand, there can be no Mission of the HOLY SPIRIT that does not bring JESUS with it. In our thought, as we speak of this Person and that of the HOLY TRINITY, we speak of them as different; but in their work they are the same. The HOLY SPIRIT crieth, "Abba, Father," in our hearts, and takes of CHRIST and shows Him to us. And therefore I want first of all to show the ground on which we have the right to expect that this mighty Person whom we call the HOLY SPIRIT shall be working among us, not only in the Mission, but always; secondly, what it is we may be expecting Him to do all the time in the parish and in our hearts; if He is not doing it, what it is that is hindering His work; and, lastly, what we are to do, while there is yet time—and remember how very short the time often is—to give free scope to the work of the HOLY SPIRIT, and let Him work His will with us, both as a parish, as a Church, and as individual souls.

And, first, why are we justified in believing that the HOLY SPIRIT should be personally working in our midst? Throw your minds back for a few moments to the earliest records that we have of the HOLY SPIRIT's work. We take the time when this earth was a chaos, when it was still, as you may say, in solution,

and we are told "the SPIRIT brooded on the face of the waters"; and when we are asked to-day how this cosmos, how this Divine order, this beautiful world which we see to-day, was brought out of that chaos, we say it is the work of the HOLY SPIRIT. Some people wonder to-day whether the HOLY SPIRIT is a spirit of order. They would, for instance, find fault with an ordered and beautiful service, such as you have in your church, on the ground that it is more spiritual to have no form of service at all. I believe in the simplest Mission services, I believe in extempore prayer, I believe in speaking in the open air; but it is those, surely, who limit and misunderstand the Mission of the SPIRIT who do not believe that the SPIRIT works also in the most ordered and beautiful services of the Christian Church.

We come on to the times of the Old Testament—the times of the prophets. What do we see? The HOLY SPIRIT takes man after man. He often takes the roughest of men, men of little education, for we are told the SPIRIT of the LORD came upon them—the SPIRIT of the LORD came upon this man and that, and used him for His work; and there is no understanding how those simple uneducated men did such a marvellous work unless they did it by the power of the SPIRIT. Then comes the next work of the HOLY SPIRIT. GOD's great revelation is at hand; but who is to prepare for the mighty Incarnation? who is to work it out? who is to bring it to pass? "The HOLY GHOST shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the SON of GOD." The Incarnation is the work of the HOLY SPIRIT. The Incarnate SON comes forth upon His ministry; He has laid aside His glory. Though He was equal with GOD, He thought it not a thing to be snatched at to be equal with GOD, but

"made Himself of no reputation"; He put Himself on our level for His work. In whose power is He to resist temptation? in whose power is He to work His miracles? in whose power is He to preach? We are told "He went in the power of the SPIRIT preaching the Word." The SPIRIT driveth Him into the wilderness. "The SPIRIT of the LORD is upon me, because the LORD hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor." And yet all the time the Incarnate SON of GOD points on to an even more intimate nearness of the HOLY SPIRIT. "He is *with* you, but He shall be *in* you." "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; and if I depart, I will send Him to you." "I will not leave you orphans; I will come unto you."

And then comes that wonderful day, the birthday of the Christian Church. "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high"; and as they tarried, waiting, praying, expecting, they heard a sound of rushing, mighty wind, and with tongues of fire down came in full power and full force the HOLY GHOST from Heaven. Timid men became brave, irresolute men became bold; and anyone who watches the work of Pentecost must acknowledge the mighty power of GOD the HOLY GHOST. The promise was fulfilled. Has He gone back? has there been a day on which we mark the return of the HOLY GHOST to Heaven? Thank GOD, there has not! The whole history of the Christian Church is one great evidence to the person and the power of the HOLY GHOST. But for the presence of the HOLY GHOST in the Christian Church coming down and filling with life the body which CHRIST had prepared so carefully, the Church must have perished from coldness or heresy, at times when the life seemed to have

died out of it. The power of recovery in the Christian Church is due to the power of the HOLY GHOST. Yes, we seemed dead, for instance, in the eighteenth century—we seem dead in parishes sometimes now—but time after time there comes a revival, the power of the HOLY GHOST seems to be shown again, and seems to come back ; and the long history of the Christian Church, in its falls and recoveries, as well as in its great successes, is a record and a witness to the power of the HOLY GHOST.

What, then—and this brings me to the second question—what, if we are certain that He is here, should we be expecting Him to do in the parish and in individual souls if He is at work among us? First, in the Church and in the parish at large, if the HOLY GHOST has had free scope among you, there must have been a growing unity year after year, because the HOLY GHOST is the spirit of love. There must have been more harmony among Church-workers, and less and less friction, if the HOLY GHOST is at work among them. Ever unceasingly is the HOLY SPIRIT trying to make Christians love one another. "Now abideth"—He ever whispers the message of this Sunday—" now abideth faith, hope, love—these three ; but the greatest of these is love." If the HOLY GHOST has been working among you during these years, there must have been an ever-increasing Mission zeal among you. Every year you must have been more and more determined, at any sacrifice, to spread the kingdom of JESUS CHRIST in this world—interested in your own business, but ten times more interested in the business of the kingdom of GOD ; there must have been more generous devotion to Mission work abroad—a keener interest to see whether that tribe, that nation, will hear the Gospel or not. The

HOLY GHOST spreads, if He is at work, a real, full practical, undying mission zeal among GOD's people. If the HOLY GHOST is at work in a place, then the whole life of that place is growing purer and purer every day; every home is full of the spirit of unselfishness; the boys and girls are brought up in an atmosphere where everything that can defile them is, so far as possible, excluded, and where they grow in grace as they grow in years, if the HOLY GHOST is working in that place. The men who leave for their place of business every day where the HOLY GHOST is at work go down into the City more and more determined to be honourable, straightforward in their business, and never, for any advantage in the world, to break even by an iota the strict code of honour and honesty. The women who keep the home in a place where the HOLY GHOST works speak ill of their neighbours less and less; more and more rush forward to shield by their influence one who is persecuted, or ill-treated, or spoken hardly of. That is what happens when the HOLY GHOST is at work in a place. And what happens to the individual soul when the HOLY GHOST is at work there? The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, but if the HOLY SPIRIT is at work in the soul, each year is the spirit gaining on the flesh; every year there is more control of the passions, and the instincts are held down by an iron hand in the power of the HOLY GHOST; every year is there a greater sense of the love of GOD, because the HOLY GHOST cries "Abba, Father! Abba, Father!" in the heart; every year there is a deeper sense of JESUS CHRIST as the one great reality of the world, because the HOLY GHOST is taking of CHRIST and showing Him to the soul. Every sermon, however simple it is, the Bible-reading, the reading of the

devotional book, are all being brought home, because the soul is listening for what the LORD GOD will say concerning it, and CHRIST becomes a living, bright reality more and more to the soul where the HOLY GHOST works. Prayer is more earnest, because the prayer is in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT. However cold and dead we are, "Come, HOLY GHOST, our souls inspire," we say, and the HOLY SPIRIT comes and prays in us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Now, I come here to ask you whether this is what is going on in your homes, in your parish, and in your souls. Do not imagine I do not ask myself the question pretty often, and as conscientiously as I can. But to-day I ask you, Is the HOLY GHOST allowed to work His full work among you? Or are any of you quenching the SPIRIT, grieving the SPIRIT, or resisting the SPIRIT? Notice that each one of those words is a Scriptural word. Are you *quenching* the SPIRIT, quenching as we quench fire with water? Are any of you quenching the fire of the HOLY SPIRIT? You can do it only too easily by letting habits of indifference and apathy creep over you. Do you care less about holy things than you did five years ago? Then you are quenching the SPIRIT. We are quenching the SPIRIT when we let our business life take up all our thought and all our mind, when we give up our prayers and our Bible-reading, and let the interests of the world or social engagements occupy our whole mind and thought. I do pray any of you here who may be conscious that you are not what you were years ago in your spiritual life to take to heart this first warning of the Mission, "Quench not the SPIRIT."

Or are you *grieving* the SPIRIT? "Grieve not the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." Some of you were sealed—that

is, baptized and confirmed—long ago: "Grieve not the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, whereby you were sealed unto the day of redemption." You remember that Confirmation-day, do you not, years ago, when your heart was so soft, and you meant to live such a good life? What has happened to it all now—what happened to your Confirmation resolution? The HOLY SPIRIT wanted to nestle in your heart like the Holy Dove, and never leave you; but have you driven Him out by letting foul thoughts and foul imaginations take the place that the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD should take? Nothing grieves the HOLY SPIRIT like giving the mind and heart up to the very imaginations and thoughts with which we may be sure that the pure HOLY GHOST cannot live. I would urge you to offer your prayer in that beautiful hymn—

> "Return, O Holy Dove, return,
> Sweet messenger of rest;
> I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
> And drove Thee from my breast."

And be sure He will return.

Or are you resisting the HOLY SPIRIT? Of all sentences in the New Testament, surely the sternest is this: "Ye do always resist the HOLY GHOST; as your fathers did, so do ye." What a tremendous indictment recorded in the Acts of the Apostles that is—"Ye do always resist the HOLY GHOST"! The HOLY GHOST is leading us on by gentle influences, always trying to make us better, always leading us on to this bit of service and that bit of service; to give up this habit, that habit; and we are resisting the HOLY SPIRIT, pulling back, making powerless His work. What an awful picture for men and angels to see! I often think, if I may take a very homely illustration, that it

is just the difference between a man who is on his bicycle going with the wind down the right track and the man who is going against the wind; that is precisely the difference between the man who is yielding to the HOLY SPIRIT and the man who is resisting the HOLY SPIRIT. We never get peace until we are driven by the SPIRIT down the track of the will of GOD, and then we find peace.

Am I speaking to some who find religion is of little help to them, who are only unhappy in it? The reason is that you have only half surrendered to the power of the HOLY GHOST: you are half resisting the power of the HOLY GHOST. You get full peace as well as full power when you let the HOLY GHOST take you into His loving hands and you are driven down the will of GOD.

And, lastly, what are we to do if this is the case with us, if we are quenching or grieving or resisting the HOLY SPIRIT? First, quite clearly, at all costs, however difficult it is, we must put away the one thing, or perhaps more than one thing, which during this Mission the HOLY SPIRIT may show us is preventing us from yielding to the power of the HOLY GHOST. We must do that at every cost first. Secondly, if not already baptized, we must be baptized with water and the HOLY GHOST. "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sin." It is the LORD'S own ordinance, and He was not such a formalist as to order for the whole world a mere form. If, as is almost certain, most of you have been baptized, then come to the complement of Baptism, your Confirmation. "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the HOLY GHOST, for as yet He was fallen upon none of them." Do you not want, every one of you, the falling of the HOLY GHOST in full power? I long myself—and I

believe I speak the inner desire of every heart—I long for more and more falling of the HOLY GHOST. And he is a bold man who says that he can live quite well without the falling of the HOLY GHOST upon him. Come and be confirmed, and, if you have been confirmed, and look back sadly upon the days that have passed, and see how much you have fallen back since your Confirmation, then stir up into flame, in St. Paul's words, the gift of GOD which is in you still by the laying on of hands ; stir the flame, take off that which presses it down, bring in the wind of the SPIRIT, pray from to-day more earnestly for the air of Heaven to revive the dying embers of your soul's life, put more fuel on the fire, do something more this Lent than you have done before ; get up a little earlier and read a devotional book ; read your Bible more regularly during Lent ; go to one more celebration of the Holy Communion than you have usually done in the week —do something ; put on the fuel of service. What is the HOLY GHOST drawing you to do ? To be a Sunday-school teacher, to help the lads of the parish, to do something among your less fortunate sisters ? Put on fuel by taking that bit of service to which you are guided. And, if we do that, if we put aside what is driving the SPIRIT out of the soul, if we purify our soul until there is no cloud between it and the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, then, please GOD, there shall rise from this church, this parish, a bright glow of spiritual fire ; the fire shall be alive again in every heart, and from the whole parish there shall rise a glow like the pillar of light which guided the Israelites by night, and it shall make the whole world see that GOD has been amongst us of a truth.

HIGHGATE

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

MEN ONLY

II

WHAT CAN MEN DO FOR JESUS CHRIST?

THE keynote or the motto of our North London Mission is to be, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My SPIRIT, saith the LORD of Hosts." It is to be a special Mission of the HOLY SPIRIT. We have considered first of all why it is that we are justified in believing that the HOLY SPIRIT, as a Divine person, will be working in the parish and also in our hearts during this Mission; and we have considered what Highgate would be like to-day if every mind and every heart in it were ruled by the HOLY SPIRIT; then what quenching, grieving, resisting the HOLY SPIRIT meant; and then whether we could not altogether leave off choking down the spiritual life within us, and make a fresh start from to-day. But I look on no Mission as complete unless, at any rate for a time, I get my brother men around me, and speak to them heart to heart and soul to soul. Over and over again I have found that there is something in the life of my brother men which is choking their spiritual life.

Sometimes it is simple indifference—nothing else in the world—spiritual slackness, the giving up of their prayers, giving up their Bible, some of them giving up going to church. Some have been confirmed, and have given up Holy Communion. Sometimes it is unbelief; and if any of you who are going through a time of doubt would send to me privately a statement of your chief difficulty, I will on Friday evening —as I did all through the West End Mission last year— answer your difficulty to the best of my power in church publicly.* Of course, if any have more private difficulties, I will try to answer them in a more private manner. But the public answer often meets the case. Again and again in Missions up and down England have I found that the difficulty lies in some moral failure. It is, for instance, among boys or young men some secret sin which is eating their heart out, revealed to no one, but making them perfectly miserable, and making them ashamed to come to church or even to say their prayers. I find at such services as these in a Mission the soul is pulled up sharp—"Where am I going?"

I propose, then, to speak this afternoon on this subject: "What can men do for JESUS CHRIST?" And before I ask it and answer it, it is quite clear that there are two other questions which must come before it. I. What has JESUS CHRIST done for men? II. Does He want men to work for Him? And, then, III. What can the men do whom He wants to work for Him?

I. And, first, What has JESUS CHRIST done for men? I am certain that often when we are answering that question we imagine that the life of JESUS CHRIST only

* See p. 23.

began some eighteen centuries ago ; but I answer that question as one who believes that the Eternal Son of God was working for men ages before He came to earth, and that, as St. John says, "without Him was not anything made that was made." Therefore, when I look round on the life of my brother men in a place like this, the first thing which I say is, "Jesus Christ has given you the very life you enjoy to-day.

1. He has given a man a man's life.

"How good is man's life, the mere living, how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses !" *

And therefore when we sing presently Dr. Liddon's favourite hymn, "May Jesus Christ be praised," remember to praise Him first for the glorious life which He has given you.

People are puzzled about miracles ; you may have your own difficulties about miracles ; but by far the greatest miracle that ever happened was when life first appeared on this world. There was a moment when there was no life. However much you believe in evolution, there was a moment when life appeared ; and therefore remember this—that the greatest miracle in the world is the possession of life. And you believe that miracle. No one even yet knows the difference between a dead body and a body that is alive. We see the difference, but no one in the world can tell us what it is. And you are apt to imagine you can believe only what you can understand. I must say that what has helped me in my times of difficulty is this : I believe in life, I believe in this tremendous miracle ; but I cannot understand, and no one can

* Browning, "Saul."

understand, what life is. Whatever it is, however, JESUS CHRIST gave it us.

2. And then, again, JESUS CHRIST gave us a man's love. I speak no doubt to some who come from happy homes, and whose great delight in life is in their wives and children, and the pure and beautiful homes to which they are going back. I want to say a word about that. I want to say a word, especially to the young men here, as to the difference between love and lust. Love is the most beautiful thing in the world; pure love is one of those perfect gifts of which St. James speaks when he says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above"; but lust is the parody of love. As Shakespeare says:

> "Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,
> But lust's effect is tempest after sun;
> Love's gentle spring doth alway fresh remain,
> Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done."

Remember that, you who are going through the specially tempted time of life. The powers of our bodies are sacred; love is a sacred thing. Those of you who are still young, keep yourselves pure for a pure marriage some day, and, if it is not GOD'S will that you should ever marry, you will never be worse off in health for a chaste life.

3. And so, again, CHRIST gives us a zest and a keenness in work. Aristotle said, "Pleasure is the bloom on successful energy"; and do we not find a zest and an enjoyment in our work which we could get in no other way? I remember that grand old man whose life has lately been published, Archbishop Temple, when speaking to a thousand men at the Oxford House, saying, "JESUS CHRIST not only satisfies the conscience,

but He educates it," and he added in his blunt, plain-spoken way: "Doing one's duty is the only thing that satisfies one." And I am certain some of you will endorse that. Is not there a bloom of pleasure on successful energy, to use Aristotle's phrase, which nothing else gives us? "Something attempted, something done." CHRIST has given us that man's joy, that man's delight. You do not find that it is the men full of work, you do not find it is the men whose heart and brain are ever filled with useful work for others, who degrade themselves in animal ways.

4. And so, again, CHRIST has given us the joy of fellowship, the happiness of friendship. Again, that same old writer, Aristotle, said, "Man is a social animal," and we are born not to be at our best as individuals. The religious life is not at its fullest when we read our Bible at home, or say our prayers at home. One of the reasons that make us certain we are born for society, for a Church, is the keenness of the pleasure and the joy which we have in fellowship together. Man is born for fellowship.

5. And yet, as I think over the debt which I owe my Saviour, I cannot stop there. I could acknowledge the life, the love, the joy in work, the fellowship that He has given me, but I should still be face to face with difficulties about GOD which but for the work that He has done for me I should not be able to solve. I should still ask this sort of question—"I have never seen GOD: how am I to love Him?" Some people say to me: "I want a person; don't come and preach to me about some vague impalpable force: I want a person to love." "How can you prove to me," said someone the other day, "that GOD can give up anything? *How* can GOD give up anything?" "Look at the suffering!" How often that was pressed home to me in East

London! "Look at the poor children dying, and you say your GOD is a loving GOD!" "Look at the hundreds swept away by earthquakes and by great waves of the sea!" I frankly admit, speaking to you as man to men, I could not love a GOD who stayed alone up in the sunshine and brightness; I could not worship a rose-crowned Apollo who never dipped his finger in the world's anguish; but I can follow, and can ask you to follow to the death, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief. The Incarnation is GOD's answer to the doubts of His children. Have you never seen GOD? St. John answers: "That which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled of the Word of Life declare we unto you." Do you want a person? God answers: "I show you a Person, and such a Person! Can GOD give up anything? He gave up everything. "GOD so loved the world that He gave His only begotten SON," and "JESUS CHRIST, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor." And as to the suffering and sorrow, I cannot explain it; JESUS CHRIST Himself said: "I have many things to say to you, but ye cannot bear them now"; but one thing He seems to say I can do for you, I can bear the worst with you. "See, the blood blinds My eyes, the scourge falls on Me."

> "Take it in trust a little while,
> Soon shall you read the mystery right
> In the full sunshine of His smile."

The fifth thing He has done for me is to give an answer to my doubts.

6. And then, again, have you ever thought what we owe CHRIST for His Church? How do we come to

be here at all? How did we ever hear the news about what God has done through Jesus Christ? It was because, looking ahead into the generations to come, Jesus Christ founded His Divine society. What was He doing up in the mountains and in the valleys? Why did He leave the crowd and take a few apart by themselves? He tells us what His design was. "On this rock," He said, "I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He wanted a Divine society to last on down the ages and communicate to men His ideas, and live for them and die for them; and it is because of that Divine society which brings us the Bible, the Sacraments, the Creed, which came to us, touched us on the shoulder, called us into the fellowship, that we are here. Once I did not see that with the same clearness as I see it now; but when I think over my debt to Jesus Christ I must go down upon my knees and thank Him that He founded His Church.

II. And then, secondly, before we ask what we can do for Him, we must face the question, "Does Jesus Christ want men to come out and work for Him?" See how He called first one, then another, when He was on earth. He saw one fishing: He called him; another at the counting-house: He called him; and Andrew, when he was called, fetched his brother Simon. As I look out on London to-day, it is as plain to me as if I saw Jesus Christ by the Sea of Galilee calling now this one and now that. He is calling you, my brothers, to His service to-day. The other day I came across an army officer who was spending five months out of the six months' leave he had in East London. I was interested to find out what it was that had brought him there, and I found that he had been brought there by a young

subaltern in his regiment, whose consistent life had won him to belief in JESUS CHRIST. JESUS CHRIST had called that young man, he had responded to the call, and it was his influence that brought the other. This very week I had another case, of a peer under conviction of sin. What had brought to him conviction of sin? The influence of a neighbour, who had been influenced by another, who, again, had been converted by a Mission held in the district. Do you mean to say after that, when brother is bringing brother, that JESUS CHRIST is not calling you to fetch your brother as Andrew fetched his brother Simon? You are the missioners to convert this place and all London. Have you realised the holiness of the layman? There is only one priest, JESUS CHRIST, but the whole body of the Church is priestly. We priests are the organs of the priestly body, but there is no difference in the standard. I will ask you to find any place in the Bible where there is any difference in the standard of holiness between the layman and the clergyman. You are called, you are in the Divine society, you have been baptized into it. Some of you have been confirmed in it. CHRIST is calling you. He wants you. *I* cannot reach that man who works alongside you in the warehouse, that man in the same office with you, the man who lives up the hill here by you. You can reach him, and, as certain as the sun is in the heavens, JESUS CHRIST calls you to work for Him by bringing him; and I pray and shall pray that some of you may answer to the call.

III. What, then, is it that we can do? 1. First of all—and this every one of us can do—we can live a life of consistent witness. I always remember what a Bethnal Green father said to me about his boy. He said: "Well, Mr. Ingram, I don't go to church myself,

but this I will say: my boy that does go is the best boy I have got." That is what we want—to have the one who does come to church, the one who is, perhaps, a communicant, the best boy in the family, the most unselfish, purest-minded, straightest man or lad in the works. That is what draws people. Let me ask you a straight question, my brother: Is your witness the witness that CHRIST expects of you? It is not, if you repeat filthy stories in the presence of others; if you are too cowardly to see that where you work no lad is the worse for what is said; if you are too cowardly to stand up and acknowledge that you believe in GOD and CHRIST. We live to bear witness. CHRIST stated the object of man's life when He said: "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth." And there is no other object, so far as I know, in being alive at all, unless we bear witness to the truth. Ask yourself this question: "Has any single soul been brought to JESUS CHRIST by the witness of my life?"

2. Or, again, CHRIST wants us to break up false traditions: for instance, the false tradition of a drink over every bargain in the City; the false tradition of secret commissions; the false tradition of the difference between a man's responsibility and a woman's with regard to purity. He expects us to treat every woman with knightly chivalry and to show our colours by coming, at any rate on the LORD's day, to His church. I often think the Sunday question is argued on the wrong principle. It is not a question of, "Is it wrong to do this or that on Sunday?" The question is a positive one. When the poor woman brought the costly box of ointment, the question she asked herself was this: "What is the price of the offering I am going to make my Saviour? I owe Him, I know, everything, but how

much is it going to cost me?" She brought not the cheapest, but the costliest. On Sunday the question you have to ask is not, "Is it a sin to play golf on Sunday?" but, "What is the offering I am going to pour upon my Saviour's head in return for what I owe Him? I do not profess to owe Him less than that poor woman; shall I offer to the LORD my GOD of that which has cost me nothing?" And that is why to get up in the morning and come to an early service is worth more than coming late, because we give the best; that is why, on a fine Sunday, to come to church and show our colours and offer worship is of value, because it costs something. We come to church for what we can give, not for what we can get. And therefore CHRIST expects us to do this, and we can do it. What can men do for JESUS CHRIST? They can worship Him before the world.

3. And, lastly, they can push, by their influence and by their words, His kingdom in this world. I do not see how a man can be a Christian—a real Christian—unless he is keen to spread the Gospel at home and abroad. It seems to be the real test of whether you have got a grip upon a thing if you are keen to pass it on. If you really believe that CHRIST died for every soul, you must want every living soul to hear the Gospel of salvation. And therefore He does expect you to be secretaries of guilds in your parishes, to help those who are working for a Mission, to help on a Mission by working up the services. One of the keenest Church workers now working in East London at one time did not believe in anything. He now works up all the men's services in the district. That is what men can do for JESUS CHRIST. My brothers, I ask you, in the first quiet time you have at home, to kneel down and remind yourself of what JESUS CHRIST

has done for you. I ask you to remember, if you never hear it said to you again, that, in very truth, JESUS CHRIST calls you ; that in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT He calls you to-day ; that He knows you by name, and calls you by name ; and if you have resisted that call all these years, you are resisting the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD. He has a field of service for you, in your home, where you work, and in the wider field of His Church. GOD grant that some life unconsecrated before, or not yet fully consecrated, may lay itself on the altar of service to-day.

HIGHGATE

FRIDAY EVENING

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. A young man in business has to do much of that business by giving commissions to servants of the well-to-do. The inquirer has many dependent on him, and thinks that he sees ruin staring him in the face if he does not do the business.

I would ask, Is it right or is it wrong? That is always the central thing to be faced: Is it right or is it wrong? Now, I do not suppose that anyone will deny that it is just the dishonesty of these secret commissions, which is eating the heart out of our English commercial life. So serious is it that a Commission has been already established upon it, and has given its first report; and it reports that in future it should be penal—so great does it consider the harm to the country—to give a bribe to one in the employment of another in order to get business. Then I look back—and my heart goes out in sympathy to the inquirer—and ask, How was it in the early days the Christian Church broke down bad customs? How, for instance, were the gladiatorial shows stopped in Rome? By sacrifice. The monk Telemachus leaped into the arena; he was torn to pieces, but it was the last gladiatorial show in Rome. Now, what we have to ask ourselves is this: In the Christian Church to-day, are we

to live up to the standard of Christian honesty, or are we not? It is clear that bribing servants corrupts their service; it is not really fair to competitors in business. I believe to-day that the only thing for the Christian Church to do is to keep its standard high, and to be prepared, at the cost of sacrifice, to break down the bad customs which corrupt the world. I had a man in the City in my East London days who came to me with a similar question: Was he right, being a designer, in designing houses three times the size that they really were, or was he right in spending his time in designing advertisements of the drink trade in which he did not believe? I asked Archbishop Temple, who replied: "Let him act according to his conscience." He did so, and gave up £4 a week for conscience' sake. God did not desert him. Within a few months he set up for himself, and was doing in a year or two better than he had ever done in his life before. That man acted according to his conscience, and was blessed for doing so. I feel certain that we shall only get the world right by the sacrifice and courage of Christians.

2. I am asked, Is it wrong to work on Sunday, if such work could only have been done at very great pressure during the week, and is of such a nature that it does not entail work on the part of others and is not inspired by mercenary motives? Is it wrong to read light literature, or to take some form of mild recreation, such as cycling or innocent indoor games, provided a good portion of the day be set apart for religious thought and worship?

Here, again, we must throw ourselves back on the principle. What is Sunday? Sunday is not the Jewish Sabbath, although it carries on the idea of rest and worship which the Jewish Sabbath enshrined for the good of the world. But it is the day set apart for the commemoration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, and is an Easter Day in every week. Now, the question is, How are we to keep that day of joy, rest, worship, and commemoration? Clearly we must not ask ourselves, Is it wrong to

do this or that? That is the wrong way of putting it. The question is, Are we prepared to do what the woman in the Gospel did? Are we prepared to bring a costly box of ointment and to break it upon the head of the Saviour in whom we believe? That is always the question on Sunday. What is the cost, what is the price of the worship which I am going to bring my Saviour? We must not look at it from the legal point of view, as the Jews did in the old days. What is the cost? what am I going to put it at? There stands my Saviour before me, with the marks of His Passion still on His sacred body; what is the price of the worship I am going to bring Him? The writer of this question will, I think, agree with me that he must aim at making the day a day of worship and devotion; he must make it also, so far as possible, a day of rest. One of the secrets of Mr. Gladstone's extraordinary vitality was that all his life he kept his Sundays absolutely free from his ordinary work. But, on the other hand, it must be a day of brightness and joy. We make a terrible mistake in making the young hate Sunday, wherever we are doing so. And therefore, on the understanding that we aim at making it a day of joy, worship, rest, and devotion, then I should answer my friend: It is a question of conscience, which he must settle for himself, whether that absolutely necessary work must be done or not. It is clearly not a sin to do it. It is a pity to have to do it, because it helps to despoil the day of the rest for which it was meant; but it could not be said to be a sin if you were forced to do it. So, again, there is the question of innocent recreations, such as indoor games for boys. Provided a good portion of the day is set apart for religious thought and worship, you cannot call that a sin. Charles Kingsley went to the heart of the matter when he would not allow his own children to have any form of game on Sunday, but he allowed the boys in his own parish who had no other day at all to play. And there-

fore, as to Sunday afternoon, who can say, if a boy has been at the early service, and has been on Sunday morning at the church with his family, that his walk or cycle ride on Sunday—so long as it gives no work to anyone else—can be regarded as sin? Everyone must settle in his own conscience a question like that; the Christian Church could not condemn it as a sin.

3. The third question is: Can a man be rightly considered a good Christian if he is unable to believe *in toto* the tenets of the Christian faith? The writer mentions certain tenets.

My answer is, We have got to live up to what light we have. Those, for instance, who are going through a time of doubt and cannot believe in miracles are bound to live up to the light which they have received, and according to that light they will be judged. I may be speaking to some in this church who are going through a time of doubt and difficulty: live up to what light you have, and pray for more light. Ruskin used to say: "I wonder not so much at what people suffer as what they lose." But my belief is this, that every tenet of the Christian faith which a man cannot believe is a dead loss to him in strength and comfort. The whole rounded Gospel of the Christian Church is the key that fits the lock of human hearts; do not sit down, then, and be content, my brother, with your doubt about any doctrine. Seek for light, and pray for it—for you are clearly an educated man—and be certain of this, that when God has given you the full truth you will be a happier man than you are to-day, and a stronger man.

4. An inquirer asks why he should be forbidden by his people to go to the theatre and play cards on Ash Wednesday.

Surely the question answers itself. He ought to be doing something else: he ought to be thinking about his soul, about the certainty of death and the greatness of eternity, and looking into his heart and preparing for a

careful Lent and a happy Easter. That is the answer. My East End young men saw that in a moment, when it was a question of Sunday boating. "You know my views," I said: "you ought to be doing something else at the time." And therefore, when we look at the purpose and the meaning of a day like Ash Wednesday, the question surely answers itself.

5. The most serious question, in conclusion, is contained in two letters about the life after death. The writers have been reading a book which I know, but have not read myself for ten or fifteen years, "Our Life after Death." They say that the book has made a great impression upon them, and has been a comfort to them in many ways, and they ask what they are to believe about the life after death.

As to that particular book, I cannot say that I followed it in all its conclusions. What seemed to me to be left out—for it preached a kind of universalism—were the strong things that Jesus Christ Himself said. It was He who used the strong language: it is not the Athanasian Creed; that hymn repeats in nearly all its statements what is in the Bible. It is Jesus Christ's words that are the difficulty, and, if He speaks about "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched," and with tears in His voice entreats us to beware, who are we to water down what He says? And therefore I would recommend you a book which I believe to be thoroughly sound, and which I have read to-day, called "The Life of the Waiting Soul," by Canon Sanderson. I would recommend this to the two questioners, and you will see there all the sound conclusions which there are in the other book, but it seems to me to be a more balanced statement of the truth. When we look, for instance, into the other world, how are we to think of that other world? It is clear from the Bible that its writers do not contemplate our going straight to Heaven. This final resting-place of redeemed souls is always represented as coming

after the Great Day. Death is not the Great Day at all. What are those souls, for instance, waiting for under the altar? "How long, O LORD, how long?" is their cry. They were waiting for something which was to come. And therefore, it seems to be told us in the Bible that there is an intermediate state called Paradise—"To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise"—and that we pass into that state five minutes after death, exactly the same as we were five minutes before. I ask you here, Are you ready to pass into eternity for ever? are you perfectly ready to spend your life with the saints and angels in the presence of the eternal GOD for ever? Do you not want some purifying, some preparing? Think of those who have died whom you know. Were they perfectly ready and prepared for the vision of GOD? It seems to me that it is a comfort to think that they are taken into the presence of JESUS CHRIST (for He is there in Paradise—"It is better to depart and be with CHRIST, which is far better"), and taught at His feet, in a further school, having their faults corrected, taught more about GOD, in order that they may be prepared for the Great Day when it comes—the Great Day after which comes the life of Heaven. And if we ask ourselves what we have in Paradise five minutes after death, there is clearly memory. "Son, remember," Dives is told in the parable. It was mockery to say that if he had no memory. We have character—we have the character which we have attained by our life on earth. "Judas went to his own place," the place he had prepared for himself. We all go to our own place, the place which we are preparing every day by our lives here. Death does not change us at all, it makes no difference, we are precisely the same, and therefore we have the other side of the veil the character—and that is the awful part of it—which has been impressed upon us by our life here: all the little judgments, the little decisions, the bitternesses, the meannesses, are all seen in their mark upon the character when

the body dies. So we believe that in the sunshine of the presence of CHRIST in Paradise we get better and grow in grace. It was prayed for Onesiphorus that he might have mercy of the LORD in that day, and I love to think of those dear ones whom I have lost growing in grace and expanding in character in Paradise.

Now comes the point, and that is, Is it certain that all will eventually be ready and prepared for the life of Heaven? I wish I thought it was so. As an ambassador, I have no right to say what is not down in my credentials. I do not find that certainty promised. On the contrary, I find that the free-will which I have now I shall have on the other side of the veil. I ask myself, then, What did JESUS CHRIST warn me against when He warned me in the strong language which I have already quoted? I believe this—that GOD will not break the free-will of men either here or anywhere else, that the free-will is part of the nature that makes me like GOD, in His image; and therefore, if GOD were to break my free-will, He would break His own image in me. He cannot make me good by His almighty power without breaking His image in me—*i.e.*, my free-will. He does everything to warn us, but He will not force us, though Bengel may be quite right when he says, "When self-will ceases, hell ceases." Take a man who has given himself up to sensuality and lust. He would hate Heaven; he would loathe it. Of course he would; he does not love good things. The laws of character are as certain as the laws of Nature. And, therefore, what JESUS CHRIST was warning us against was this—that if we have sold ourselves, our free-will here, to what is wrong, the time might come when we cannot turn. Therefore, He said, "Agonise to enter the strait gate"; that is why He warned us about "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." It does not mean the literal fire, but the gnawing of unavailing remorse, and the fire of the sin itself. And so I can preach no smooth Gospel to you.

Every man who is giving himself away to his own sin here is preparing a terrible retribution. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap"; and when people talk of sowing their "wild oats," they will reap their wild oats, and nothing else in the world.

And, if it may seem to some that this resembles the Roman doctrine of Purgatory, let me say that it is very different. In the Roman doctrine of Purgatory you will find certain classes of people are excepted from this intermediate state altogether. Even the good are said to be tormented by material fire, and it is supposed that the time may be shortened by masses said for the soul. And we all know that, historically, such an idea of Purgatory led to indulgences, and the sale of them, which was one of the abuses which caused the Reformation.

Now, I am true to the Articles of our Church, and I repudiate in the Articles the Roman doctrine of Purgatory; but I do not repudiate belief in the Scriptural truth of Paradise. And therefore I ask those who are so afraid of death—and there are two here who have written of their fear of death, which they say is very great—not to be afraid. It is only passing from the presence of CHRIST here to the presence of CHRIST there; passing from praise here to praise there, from one school to another. I said to a little child who was dying, when she said she was so afraid of death: "It is only JESUS coming to pick you up and carry you into the next room"; and she died with a smile on her face. Liberate yourself from this curse of the fear of death. Live a life of service for CHRIST here, and Death is only the slave that takes off your shoes at the end of the long day, when you are led into the nearer presence of your Saviour.

HIGHGATE

FRIDAY EVENING

III

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: LOVE

"The fruit of the Spirit is love."—Gal. v. 22.

I NEED not point out how perverted the word "love" is. Love is made to cover in our life some of the worst things about it. People dare to use the great name of love when they violate their marriage vows, when they are carried away by their passions and soil the innocence of the innocent; the word "love" is made to cloak what is arrant selfishness, and to cover the spoiling of children out of carelessness by parents who do not reflect upon the effect which the way they show their love has on the character of the child. Or we think of love as a kind of fickle sentiment, absolutely different from the strong, imperial power of the will.

Now, that is not the love which is the fruit of the Holy Spirit at all. I want to give you now what I hold to be the characteristics of true love. And, mind you, true love covers the love of the lover for her whom he loves, the love of husband for wife, of wife for

husband, parent for child, and friend for friend. We must not divide love into spiritual and carnal love. A child of GOD cannot divide up his love in that way at all. I am speaking of the characteristics of the love which should govern all our relations, and which should find its final fulfilment in the love of GOD.

Now, the first characteristic of the love which is the fruit of the SPIRIT is that it is pure. The love "that is from above is first pure." And here I may recall what a questioner from the congregation at the men's service asked me to quote again to-night—Shakespeare's expression of the difference between true and false love:

> "Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,
> But lust's effect is tempest after sun;
> Love's gentle spring doth alway fresh remain;
> Lust's winter comes ere summer half be done."

With the genius of a great poet, he sweeps into the heart of the question—that pure love, which like the "gentle spring doth alway fresh remain," ought to govern all love, every bit of it, married love as much as all other love. It must be first pure. And as I name each characteristic, it will be better to ask yourself, "Is my love like that? Is that the kind of love I have for my friend?" Are there any here who know that under the cloak and name of love they have made many unhappy, have possibly dishonoured some? Under the cloak of friendship some, perhaps, are at this moment, as I found very frequently in my last mission, indulging an intimacy which dishonours both, or which, if it has not gone as far as that, allows their own hearts and lives and thoughts to be defiled by a thing which is not love at all, but lust.

I ask first, then, that the HOLY SPIRIT whom we have invoked may grant the gift of pure love,

that all our friendships may be lived out as in the sight of God; that nothing may be done under the name of friendship or love which God may not rightly look down upon and see. I believe that there are more lives being spoilt and made unhappy, and more prayers spoilt, and more people who cannot see God in their worship, because of this than perhaps any other sin in the world. The love which is from above is first of all pure.

Secondly, it is unselfish. True love is not primarily thinking of gratification for itself, but of the good of the being who is loved. All the most splendid stories that inspire us in all ages are examples of unselfish love, where the knight has risked death for his mistress, where the mother has risked her life for the child whom she loves. They are the most inspiring records in the whole of our human history; and what I should like to ask even the parents here is whether in loving their children they are unselfish in their love. It seems to me that sometimes parents love their children very selfishly. They like to see them about; fathers, coming home from business, enjoy seeing their children; but over and over again have we found that the home influence is not always for the ultimate good of the child. The children go, perhaps, to some good school, and in case after case have we found that the good influence of a good school was spoilt in the holidays. The selfishness which was seen at home, or the self-indulgence of one of the parents, or things allowed to be heard at home, lower the school ideal. It is not only the love of our children, if we have any, in the way of getting amusement from them or interest to ourselves, of which we ought to think; but we ought to think, when that child is presented, at the end of all things, before God as the judge, what hand the parent will have had in the making of the child's character.

It is unselfish love to consider what we are making of those lives entrusted to us, or what influence we are having on our friend, not what we can get from him.

And that brings me to the third point, which is that this love, which is the fruit of the SPIRIT, is an eternal thing; it is not the fickle thing which it is so often represented to be in the world's conversation. True love—and this is the beauty of friendship—true love lasts on for ever.

> "They sin who tell us love can die;
> With life all other passions fly;
> All others are but vanity.
> In Heaven ambition cannot dwell,
> Nor avarice in the vaults of hell;
> Of earth these passions of the earth,
> They perish where they have their birth;
> But love is indestructible:
> Its holy flame for ever burneth.
> From Heaven it came, to Heaven returneth.
> Full oft on earth a troubled guest,
> At times deceived, at times opprest,
> In Heaven it finds its perfect rest.
> It soweth here in time and care,
> But the harvest-time of love is there."

Now, is your love, your friendship, something which can last on, something which you will not be ashamed of in Paradise? Surely it means a great thing to our lives if we make our friendships with the idea that they are going to last on through eternity. You would not have so many people corrupted and pulled back by their friends if we made our friendships with this idea. The fruit of the SPIRIT is love, and that love lasts on. Do not grieve too much, you who have lost some dear one in the last twelve months. That friend is your friend now. The presence of a friend in Paradise ought to draw your heart up to higher things.

"Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also"; and what greater treasure is there than some good and holy friend who has passed behind the veil?

Then, fourthly, it must be a positive thing, this love. If you look at and meditate upon your knees upon the Epistle for this week—the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians (R.V.)—you will see what love is said to do. "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not its own, is not provoked." I often think that the real test of whether we have love, the fruit of the SPIRIT, is whether we are kind to, and take an interest in, and help on the uninteresting. I think the real test of whether a teacher has the true Divine love is whether he or she takes as much care of the unattractive pupils as of the lovable ones. And I am certain of this, that our love is worth nothing at all unless it is a positive force, which is winning the world by its Divine power, and cheering and helping on every hand those who would not be attractive to our natural man. That is Divine love; there is selfishness about the other.

And then, fifthly, as a last point, this love must go out, like the love of GOD, into all the world. It must be love in the truest sense towards those whom we have never seen—the heathen, young English boys who have got no clergyman or church in our colonies. It must begin with our home circle, it must reach out into the society in which we move, and it must not rest until it has gone out into the whole world. And, mark this, if it does that, then we shall begin properly to love GOD, for "he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love GOD, whom he hath not seen?"

I ask you, then, whether you have that love in your hearts, in your home, among your friends—whether you have this pulsing, strong, Divine, purifying thing. The Mission leaves your church to-night to go on elsewhere. I do not want it to leave Highgate without leaving the first-fruit of the SPIRIT in your midst. I ask you to pray to-night to have the Divine gift of love. I ask you to pray that the love of GOD may be shed abroad in your heart by the HOLY SPIRIT which shall be given to you. I ask you to-night to be more loving in your lives, and to begin at once with the first person who is a trial to you. Is there someone at home who is a great trial to your temper? Pray regularly for that person, and in the power of the SPIRIT try to love that person. "Love your enemies, pray for those who despitefully use you." Your love is worth nothing if it does not conquer difficulties like that. And if with the united power of the HOLY SPIRIT we pray to be more loving, to live a life of love, then there will settle down a great purifying power in our midst.

> "Live life of love that others who
> Behold your life shall kindle too
> With love, and cast their lot with you."

ISLINGTON

SUNDAY EVENING

IV

THE CONVICTION OF SIN

"When the Comforter is come, He will convict the world in respect of sin."—St. John xvi. 8 (R.V.).

I WOULD say two preliminary words to you in Islington. First, that although this Mission passes from church to church, it has one message and one object. Its message is the power and work of God the Holy Ghost, and its object is to melt into penitence every soul that it touches in North London, and then to lead it into peace. We take week by week now this feature, now that, of the Holy Spirit's work, that so, before Lent is over, the whole Gospel of the Holy Spirit may, if it please God, be brought home to the heart of North London.

And the other word is that a Mission, like death, is charged with reality. The Holy Spirit can do nothing unless we are real people, and therefore it is that, as in other churches, I ask you to send up during the week your perplexities, your questions, your doubts, your difficulties (without any name; no secret shall be betrayed), in order that in answer to the real doubts,

and the real difficulties, and the real troubles the Mission message may be preached to the souls of men. At Highgate on Friday we had a most moving Mission service, because, since the Sunday service, troubles, doubts, and difficulties, had been pouring in. We prayed also for this person and for that person who was in trouble—for one actually in the Church who was in the chains of intemperance ; and so the HOLY SPIRIT was able to work more effectually in our midst. I ask you again here to write to me about any difficulties, especially any that may arise from what I say to-night ; and on Wednesday, by GOD's help, I will answer such difficulties, and speak about such perplexities from this pulpit,* and pray, and ask the prayers of the whole congregation, for those in any difficulty or trouble who may desire on Wednesday to have our prayers.

Now, to-night we take for our meditation this tremendous work of GOD the HOLY GHOST. "When the Comforter is come, He will convict the world in respect of sin." There is nothing in the world more difficult than to convict any soul of sin, or to be convicted of sin ourselves, and that for four reasons.

First of all, because of the deep-seated self-complacency, the being quite pleased with ourselves, which blinds us, or is apt to blind us all—clergy, laity, men and women, boys and girls. While we are quite pleased with ourselves we are not convicted of sin, and while we are not convicted of sin GOD can do nothing more with us. To be "convicted in respect of sin" is the first step. And then, secondly, the difficulty which the HOLY SPIRIT finds is our tendency to imagine that we are going to be judged by the standard of our set. I remember so well when I was speaking about the

* See p. 47.

Good Shepherd and the lost sheep to a man once in a slum where I was visiting him, he said quite cheerfully : "Oh yes, I quite understand, I understand all about that ; the more a man sins the better GOD likes him." What he had carried away from Mission sermons which he had heard was this, that GOD liked, if I may put it in what his language would have been, "a good big sinner." We had begun on the wrong side of the Gospel with him. What he wanted was to have preached to him, first of all, judgment to come. He had no idea that he was a sinner ; he did not realise that he was trampling underfoot the Blood of the Most High, and putting Him to an open shame. He was judging himself by the standard of his set. Am I speaking to some to-night who very rarely come to church, who have only come to church to-night as an exceptional thing, and who are comforting themselves with the idea that this does not matter because their street does not come to church, because it is not the fashion ? Or am I speaking to some who have uneasy prickings of conscience sometimes about the sort of conversation that goes on in their office or in their warehouse, but who say, "Well, after all, I am no worse than the others," and their half-awakened conscience is drugged by the standard of their set ? We shall say something—or, rather, the HOLY SPIRIT will have something to say—about the standard by which we shall be judged. Then, again, how blinded we are—and I am preaching to myself in these Missions as much as I am preaching to you—how blinded we are apt to be by the good opinion that this person or that person has of us ! Over and over again a man is beginning to be drawn towards better things, or perhaps to be a little ashamed of himself ; he begins to be conscious that his life is not what it should

be ; he looks round, and he sees that his club thinks him quite a good fellow. Or some girl may be stirred up a little bit by a sermon or Mission towards conviction of sin ; but she finds herself quite popular among her comrades. She is witty and clever, and "passes the laugh" easily. She says to herself, and the man says to himself, "I cannot, after all, be so bad, if I am so popular with them and if so many people like me." And so the Devil soothes to sleep the conscience that the HOLY SPIRIT has begun to awaken.

Then, again, fourthly, I want you to follow me in your own consciences all the time, and ask : "Is it I ? Are these things true of me ? Is this thing that is named on *my* conscience ?" Don't you know how easy it is for us to persuade ourselves that we are exceptions ? Our family history was so peculiar, or we live in the midst of a world of such special temptations, or our ancestors, our family, have handed down to us a constitution which requires, for instance, stimulant. I have known a man who was struggling against the drink craving persuade himself that his family history made it impossible for him to conquer it, that he was an exception. Or a man has said to me before now, "Oh, you know, I can say my prayers all right as I walk about. I am not like some people who must go to church. I don't want this kind of help. I am an exceptional kind of man ; I go by my reason." I remember a man in a Mission whom I went to see because I was told he was an atheist, and I put a few home questions to him. He said, "Oh no, I am not an unbeliever : I am a great believer ; but I am a *self-believer*."

Now, those four things—the idea that we are exceptional people ; the good opinion of our friends (often founded on a very insufficient knowledge, I may

say) ; the standard of our set (supposed to be the standard by which we shall be judged) ; self-complacency, the tendency to be thoroughly pleased with ourselves—those are the four things which the HOLY SPIRIT finds confronting Him when He comes to do His blessed work in convicting us in respect of sin. I need not point out—as I should if I was lecturing to you on the history of the thing—that that is the reason why you find in the past people who thought they were quite good condoning and pardoning and passing over what we now see to be the most terrible sin. Take the Romans, for instance ; it never occurred to the rich noble who went to his luxurious bath and lived a luxurious life that he had no right to keep in slavery the slaves who did his work for him, and live a luxurious life himself. He was unconvicted of sin. Saul, before he was converted and became St. Paul, was quite sure he was right in crushing out the little band of sectaries who called themselves Christians. He was unconvicted of sin. More striking, perhaps, than this, a man like Seneca, a really great philosopher in many ways, a contemporary of St. Paul, wrote of infanticide : "Weakly children we put away. It is not cruelty, but reason, to separate the one from the other." Here was Seneca condoning what the poorest woman in Islington would think the most atrocious crime—the exposure to death of the weakly children whom they did not want. That just shows what being accustomed to a standard, being accustomed to a tradition, what being a slave to the opinion of the day, led people to in the days that are past.

Now, we know what the HOLY SPIRIT does. He cuts right away from us all these four things on which we stand, and He tears away all these four veils which blind our eyes. He, first of all, tears away—and that

is the first veil I pray that He may tear away from all your eyes to-night—the veil of self-complacency. He convicts of sin because He convicts of judgment. Have you realised, my brother, that you and I have to stand one by one before the judgment-seat of GOD, that we have to give an account of ourselves before GOD, that every day that passes is bringing us nearer to that judgment, and that, as a matter of fact, GOD is judging us every day we live? When we ask what happened to Judas, what are we told? We are told that Judas "went to his own place"—*his own place*, mark you, the place that he had been preparing for himself all the time that he had been alive on earth; every day had Judas been preparing for his own place.. There is not the slightest doubt that, if you and I died to-night, we should go to our own place—the place which we have been preparing for ourselves by our life here. You do not imagine, do you, that death is going to change you? The real terror of death is that it changes absolutely nothing. If, for instance, there is a man here who knows that he is under the influence of drink, that he is giving way to lustful and wicked thoughts; if there is a woman here who is being spiteful and uncharitable against her neighbour, who has hatred in her heart—is death going to change him or her to-night if it comes? Not at all. If she has not repented of and abjured her sin, if you have not turned away, dear brother, from your sin, you wake up five minutes after death the same man and she wakes up the same woman as before, and you go to your own place—the place you have prepared for yourself. And that is the first thing the HOLY SPIRIT has to bring home to us—the awfulness of judgment, and the utter folly of waiting year after year, as if some day was going to come when everything

would be changed, and we should have plenty of time to repent and get ready for Heaven. GOD save you from that miserable delusion! A man once held that that was the case; he said that there was plenty of time. "I have only got to say, 'Lord, have mercy on me!' when I die; it will be all right then." He was thrown from his horse, and as his friends gathered round him he looked up and said, "Can you do nothing for me?" He saw in their blank faces that his case was hopeless; he looked round again, and with a fearful oath he died. That comes of waiting for the time when we are going to have plenty of opportunity to repent.

Then the second work that the HOLY SPIRIT does in convicting the world in respect of sin is to bring home the standard by which we shall be judged; not the standard of your set, not the standard of what they think at the club, or the office, or the warehouse—nothing of the sort. GOD shall judge the world by the standard of that Man whom He has ordained, and that Man whom He has ordained is JESUS CHRIST our LORD. That is the standard. The generations come and go, but the standard is the same. What would JESUS CHRIST have done if He had been in your place in London? How would JESUS CHRIST have acted if He had been working as Bishop of London? What would JESUS CHRIST have said if He had stood in your office when that language was used? What would He have done if He had lived in Islington? How would He have spent the leisure time He had after His work? How would He have behaved at home to the people who lived in the same house? That is the standard, and there is no other standard in the world, by which you and I will be judged at the last. How do we meet that standard? I am speaking to-night especially to the man and the woman who are not yet convicted

of sin. What is the hidden man of the heart? what is the real man behind the outward appearance, behind what people think of you? What does the real man want to do? To what do your thoughts turn when you have a little leisure time? That is what the real man wants. What would you do if no one were looking, and no one knew what you were doing? What about your prayers? Are they forgotten? are they earnest, regular, uttered by one who believes he can do nothing except in the power of GOD? What about the outcast who lives, perhaps, in your street? What have you ever done to try and save that soul in your life? What about taking up the Cross and following CHRIST? Has it been real? Have you ever done anything really distasteful to you for the sake of JESUS CHRIST? Is anyone living in this world to-day who is able to say, "Because of that man I am a Christian," "That woman brought me to CHRIST"? May the HOLY SPIRIT make us realise to-night that that is what we shall be expected to have done. GOD will judge the world by the standard of that Man whom He has ordained; and JESUS CHRIST would have done every one of those things, and ten thousand times more.

Then, again, the HOLY SPIRIT has to break through our reliance upon the good opinion of our friends. O HOLY SPIRIT, make every one of us realise to-night that it is not what our friends think of us that matters in the least but what we think of GOD and what GOD thinks of us. Believe me, my brother and sister, nothing else whatever matters in comparison to this; the fact that a man is popular in his set is of no importance at all; but what does GOD think of me as He watches me all my time on earth—what does He think of me to-night? That is the only

question of priceless importance, and that is the question we will ask one by one upon our knees: "What does GOD think of me?"

And then, fourthly, are we exceptional? Is human conceit right in persuading us that we are exceptional people, to be exceptionally judged? If we imagine that, the HOLY SPIRIT must bring home to us the unpleasant but very wholesome truth that we are all of us very ordinary men and women, and that no temptation has taken us but that which is common to men. Do you imagine, you who have that struggle with your thoughts, that you are the only one who has ever had it? Do you imagine, you who are going through the difficulties and perplexities of doubt, that you are the only one who has ever doubted? Do you imagine, you who think it is impossible for you to master your passions, that you are the only one that has ever had to fight? There has no temptation taken you but that which is common to man. And before the HOLY SPIRIT can build up the strength in you, and give you the food which He wants to give you, and is ready to give you, to make you a strong, self-controlled, and holy man, He has first to make you realise that you have broken His laws.

And so our task to-night is to let the HOLY SPIRIT do His work among us. "When the Comforter is come, He will convict the world in respect of sin"; but the Comforter must be allowed to come into our hearts. The Comforter cannot do his work among us unless He comes into our hearts. "Come, HOLY GHOST, our souls inspire," then, must be our prayer; "come, HOLY GHOST, convict each of us in respect of sin"; and then the blessed work begins. There is not one who is penitent and humble and contrite, not one who faces the sins which the HOLY SPIRIT

shows him, who may not be transformed into a son of God. We want to have more spiritual ambition. The Holy Ghost, when He has convicted us of sin, leads us forth into the land of righteousness. He wants to have centres of living force in Islington, and that is why He must do His first work to-night, that He may be able to use the souls whom He has purged and purified. On Wednesday we shall speak of the joy which is the gift of the Holy Ghost, but to-night, down upon our knees, let us ask that the light may show us what we are, and in humble penitence ask to be forgiven.

ISLINGTON

WEDNESDAY EVENING

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. The first question is from a lad in Islington. He was living in sin some ten days ago, and by what is sometimes called chance was guided into Highgate Parish Church on the First Sunday of the Mission. He asks whether it was God's Holy Spirit that was guiding him.

There cannot be a doubt that he was led by that Holy Spirit whom we invoke in this Mission, and that it was He and no one else who has spoken the message in such a way to his soul. And therefore he must remember that he has a special responsibility now, because if he goes back to his old life he resists the Holy Ghost. Resist not the Spirit.

2. I have many questions about the life after death, and one is : Can a soul repent in Paradise ?

I pictured Paradise last Wednesday as a place in which we expand, in which the imperfect soul expands, to the sunshine of Christ's love. Now here, as we get to know more and more of the love of Christ, our contrition deepens. It is only a very shallow view of repentance that thinks that we have to forget sin when we are forgiven. The Fifty-first Psalm was written after forgiveness, and what the penitent soul does, on earth, is to look back and see how much it has been forgiven. It does not think

the sin is not forgiven, but contrition for it deepens. I can conceive that this is what happens in Paradise ; the contrition, the sorrow—when we look at it with other eyes and from a clearer point of view—for what we did wrong on earth deepens. It does not mean for a moment that we are not forgiven. God forbid ! I shall speak of that later on to-night. But certainly contrition may deepen, and as love deepens contrition deepens. "To whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much."

3. Again, I am asked : "Is it true, once a Christian, always a Christian ?"

No, if the question means "once saved, always saved." We must answer that by another question. If you are in a lifeboat, you have got to stop in it. If you tumble out you are not safe, however good the lifeboat may be. And therefore those who have been by baptism, or first by conversion, and then afterwards by baptism brought into the lifeboat of the Christian Church must stay in it. Otherwise what are those warnings about those who fall away and trample under foot the Son of God, and put Him to open shame ? It is not true, then, in that sense, that "once saved means always saved." We must always keep in God's lifeboat.

4. One poor soul asks what is to be done about coldness of heart.

Well, that coldness of heart is sometimes sent as a trial. There may be some here who have great coldness of heart, but they are persevering with their prayers ; they are coming to church, they are going on with their Communion. They do right in going on. Religion is not feeling. We are saved by faith, and not by feelings. On the other hand, it is essential to look into our lives and see whether there is any cause for that coldness. Is there some sin to which we are clinging which causes coldness in the spiritual life ? If there is no sin which can be discovered, and if there is nothing upon the conscience, then the coldness and the dryness of the spirit must be taken as

a trial. The prayers that are offered by the dryest soul are often the best, because they are offered by the will, and you must not think that God does not hear you because you have no spiritual fervour. God knows all about you, and you may be quite sure our loving Father hears and answers the patient prayer that is prayed in spite of coldness and deadness.

5. There is one who writes to say that he has a home in which there are many who do not believe in religion at all, and in which the atmosphere is very hard to bear, where there is scoffing at religion, and laughing at him for coming to church and to the Mission.

I say to him, That is your Cross. You are a soldier, and you are put into a very hot place ; but turn to the Book of Revelation, and you see that Christ says, "I know thy place, even where Satan's seat is, but thou hast not denied My name." Do not forget that Christ is looking to you to hold the fort. You must be loving, gentle, and patient; and you will have special grace given to you to help you through your special difficulties, if you do not despair, and perhaps you may be the means some day of bringing these unbelieving relations of yours to God. That is what you are there for, to be a witness.

6. There is one question—a very sad one, and a long letter accompanies it—which shows a little misunderstanding of something which I said in my sermon on Sunday. I have had several questions about the assertion that we are the same five minutes after death as we are five minutes before. One of a large family, whose father was a very kind father for a time, but afterwards went terribly to the bad, and then died, says that they are clinging to the hope that he was changed by death.

Now, I do not say at all—for I know nothing about the case—whether he was changed either before death or after death, but all I said was that death would not change him. I do not want the children to be disheartened ; by all means hope on for him—hope for the best. The Church

has never laid down that even Judas Iscariot was eternally damned. The idea that the Church has assented to the belief that tens of thousands of souls are eternally damned is untrue. The Church lays down no doctrine on the subject. Dr. Pusey—I suppose one of the greatest and most orthodox authorities on the subject of eternal punishment—repeats with approval from Faber this beautiful saying: "No soul will ever be lost who has not had the Father throw His arms round him, look in his eyes with love, and has deliberately rejected Him." "They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father." Let us pray that that soul concerning whom the writer has sent up this long letter has not done that. My point is that death makes no difference: the actual dying, I mean. Death is simply the passing. You are the same person afterwards. I did not lay down anything about what the grace of God could do at the moment of death or any other time. Therefore, I do not want to depress those poor children; let them hope the best for their father.

7. A poor little invalid, who was here on Sunday, but who cannot come to-night—I should not like her question to be left unanswered—lies puzzling herself on her bed over many difficulties; and one is, how Lucifer, so beautiful and bright as he is painted, came to have the first wicked thought at all; in other words, how Satan became Satan.

I cannot pretend to answer this with any kind of certainty; but it seems to me that all evil is perverted free-will, and that there is nothing wicked in the universe but a wicked will. The body is not wicked, the mind is not wicked, the soul is not wicked in itself; it is the will that becomes wicked. Wickedness is the perversion of the free-will which we have been given by God, and which makes us like God. Now, as far as we know, Lucifer or Satan was a free personal spirit too. He was given free-will; he was not created wicked; and I can only suppose that this free personal spirit in the world of spirits exalted himself against God and misused his free-will, as

a man does when he becomes wicked. God does not stop a wicked man or a wicked spirit from misusing his free-will, because if He did He would break His own image in him; if He forced me to be good or you to be good, He would break His own image in us. And therefore He wins, persuades, pleads, but never forces. And that gives such a great solemnity to a Mission service, because here among us is God's Spirit pleading, persuading, drawing; but He will not force a single soul to be saved to-night; we must yield to His holy influence.

ISLINGTON

WEDNESDAY EVENING

V

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: JOY

"The fruit of the SPIRIT is joy."—GAL. v. 22.

I COULD not ask for a more congenial message than this, because I am convinced that we do not realise all the glorious joy of our religion. The end of religion is not penitence, it is not contrition, it is not conviction of sin. It is something much better than all that. The end of religion—what it is all working towards—is joy. JESUS CHRIST Himself, "for the joy that was set before Him, endured the Cross." The end of it with Him was not the Cross; the end was joy. And cannot you see—we all cannot help seeing, can we?—that all through His life, in spite of the unpopularity which He had to go through, and the suffering, the disappointment, and the desertion—cannot you see a bloom of joy over the life and work of JESUS CHRIST? I seem to see the joy in His eyes the whole time, however hard He was working and however much He had to suffer. So, again, when I take St. Paul, I find the same joy. You find him alone in

prison, you find him chained to soldiers, but he said, "Rejoice in the LORD alway : and again I say, Rejoice." You see joy gleaming in the eyes of St. Paul. The end of his life was joy. And as I look round the workers of London I find that their Christian work is good in proportion to the joy which they have in it. It was said very well by a writer "that the goodness of work was in proportion to the joy of the workman." I come across some parish priest, for instance, who has toiled in East London for perhaps fifty years, unnoticed and unknown. Do I find him depressed ? I find him tired, weary, old before his time, but I find a joy upholding him. You remember Matthew Arnold's beautiful lines :

"'Twas August, and the fierce sun overhead
Smote on the squalid streets of Bethnal Green,
And the pale weaver, through his window seen
In Spitalfields, looked thrice dispirited.
I met a preacher there I knew, and said :
'Ill and o'erworked, how fare you in this scene ?'
'Bravely,' said he ; 'for I of late have been
Much cheered with thoughts of CHRIST, the Living Bread.'
O human soul ! so long as thou canst so
Set up a mark of everlasting light
Above the howling senses' ebb and flow,
To cheer thee, and to right thee if thou roam—
Not with lost toil thou labourest through the night !
Thou makest the Heaven thou hopest indeed thy home."

"Much cheered with thoughts of CHRIST, the Living Bread"—that was his joy, that was the joy illuminating that worker, that man ! A poet like Matthew Arnold could see the joy in the worker's face. And

therefore my message to you is to-night "The fruit of the SPIRIT is joy." We have considered in another church already the first fruit of the SPIRIT—"The fruit of the SPIRIT is love." Now we take "The fruit of the SPIRIT is joy."

The question is, In what does that joy consist? I do not want a single soul here to leave this church of Islington to-night without having the fivefold joy, which is the fruit of the SPIRIT.

1. The first joy is the joy of being forgiven: "Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven, and whose sin is covered."

> "Redeemed, restored, forgiven,
> Through JESU's precious blood!
> Heirs of His home in Heaven,
> O praise our pardoning GOD!
> Praise Him in tuneful measures,
> Who gave His SON to die,
> Praise Him whose sevenfold treasures
> Enrich and sanctify."

I have seen in a Mission—and I shall never forget it, though I have seen similar sights over and over again—the face of one young man who came in to see me on the opening night, with a face of perfect agony under conviction of sin. I had the greatest difficulty in persuading him that he could be forgiven; but when I pointed him to the Cross, and he had at last believed that he could be forgiven for JESUS CHRIST's sake, and at last, after a penitent confession, that he *was* forgiven, I shall never forget his change of look. I can see now the look of joy in his face—the joy of being forgiven. Now, I may be speaking to some to-night who do not know the joy of being forgiven. Perhaps they were not here on Sunday

night, and perhaps they have never yet looked into their lives at all, as we tried to do on Sunday night. My dear friend, you cannot know the joy of being forgiven until you have known the pain of being penitent, and perhaps you have to do yourself to-night what I hope those present on Sunday did then, and have done since—take GOD's commandments by the light of the SPIRIT, and see what commandments you have broken, and look into your conscience and see what is on it. Only so can we work towards the joy of being forgiven. But I would now specially speak to those who were here on Sunday night. We ended our Sunday service by praying together, "LORD, have mercy upon us; CHRIST, have mercy upon us; LORD, have mercy upon us!" but that was not the end: it was leading up to to-night; and I want you to-night to go on a step further, and to lift up the hand of faith and take forgiveness. There are two classes of souls—some unconvicted of sin, and some who are under conviction of sin, but who have not faith enough to believe that they are forgiven. Now, if you have been honest with yourself, then believe that there is a free pardon won for you, and that you can make this Mission a fresh start, and that you can lift up the hand of faith and take the pardon from heaven. And I have prayed, and shall pray again here, that not one may let the Mission pass without being at peace with GOD, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD. If your sins are so great, so perplexing, if there are so many puzzles and difficulties, then do not be ashamed to ask your parish priest for advice. It is what we are here for, we ministers, to help souls, and especially souls under conviction of sin. It is a false shame not to ask for personal help, which ministers of the Church especially are bound to give.

2. Then, secondly, there is the joy of companionship. Part of the joy of CHRIST was that He was not alone. He says: "I am not alone, because the FATHER is with Me"; and the only moment when He was in real agony of spirit was when the FATHER'S face seemed to be blotted out from Him, and He cried: "My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" I speak now to the lonely ones here, to the lonely servants (some of whom have written to me—one especially, who asks for our prayers on behalf of a brother who has taken to drink), and I say there is no soul really lonely if it will have JESUS CHRIST for its Companion. "Lo! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world" is His promise. And I want you to have the joy of companionship, every one of you. The Christian Church was meant to be the most perfect brotherhood the world had ever seen. You cannot separate JESUS CHRIST from His own society, and therefore I say that JESUS CHRIST will be your Companion, so that you can say: "JESUS, help me! JESUS, stand by me every moment of my life." But, also, if you join such a Church as this, working in a brotherly spirit, you would find it a beautiful brotherhood; it is like joining a family. Therefore there ought not to be a single lonely person in London. I do hope if there are any lonely souls here that they will have the joy of companionship always after this Mission to their life's end, till they join afterwards the Divine society above.

3. And then, again, there is the joy of service. I am never tired of repeating those beautiful words of Bishop Phillips Brooks, of America. His sermons have been a great comfort to me for many years, especially when I was younger. He says: "It is not when a ship is fretting her side against the wharf that she has found

her true life, but when she has cut the ropes that bind her to the wharf and is out upon the ocean, with the wind over her and the waters under her: it is then she knows the joy that a ship is made for as she plunges across the sea." Cannot you see what he means? You have seen a ship riding away, liberated from the wharf, out upon the ocean—the free, glorious ocean—with the wind beating around her and the great sea under her, and you feel that is what a ship is made for; that is the glory and the joy of it. That is exactly what he says of a man. He says it is not when a man is fretting his sides against the wharf, as it were, of his own self, and when he is saying, "What will people think of me?" or "How shall I get on?" that he knows the full joy a man is made for, but when he has cut the ropes which bind him to himself and he is out upon the ocean of loving work for GOD and man, with the wind of the SPIRIT over him and the water of humanity under him—then it is that he knows the true joy a man is made for; and the same with a woman. And therefore I ask you to-night, Do you know the joy of service, the joy of doing something for other people, the joy of forgetting self, of flinging yourself into service for GOD and man? If not, then this Mission is the call to you. Forget yourself. You have in a way to remember yourself—you have to earn your living, to get money to buy bread for your families, of course; but it is by your attitude of mind, by getting away from selfishness, from the thinking of one's self at every moment; it is by seeing how you can use your leisure time for GOD's kingdom, by helping the sick neighbour here, or helping a brother there, by taking up the work of the Church where you live, giving in your name to be a Church worker—that is the way to get the joy of service. The HOLY SPIRIT will guide

you how to do it if you have the will. What I ask you to do is to seek for the joy of service before the Mission ends.

4. Then, fourthly, there is the joy of growth. How lovely it is to think of the Church as a beautiful garden, and of the HOLY SPIRIT coming down upon it like dew and making all the plants grow! It is a lovely thing to see flowers, but it is still more lovely to see boys and girls growing up in a family, with all their characters developing, to see them getting more lovely and more unselfish, to see their powers expanding every day like beautiful flowers under the influence of the HOLY SPIRIT. That is what the joy of growth is. It is a splendid thing if we feel our faith, which begins like a grain of mustard seed, expanding and expanding until it becomes a tree under which the birds of the air—other souls, that is—come and rest. A glorious thing it is to find our hope growing more and more, conquering the fear of death. I pray that you may have more and more the joy of growth. But to grow more and more "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of CHRIST" you must use the means of grace. It is the HOLY SPIRIT that works by these means of grace. You bring your children to baptism, but it is the HOLY SPIRIT that gives the grace. CHRIST takes up the little ones into His arms, and says, "Suffer the little ones to come unto Me, and forbid them not." So when you come to the Holy Communion, it is the HOLY SPIRIT working through the means of grace which makes that blessed service a true strength to your soul. Therefore keep in the garden, make use of the dew and the rain and the sunshine, that you may all grow in grace and in the knowledge of our LORD and Saviour JESUS CHRIST.

5. Fifthly, I want you to have the joy of strength.

"The joy of the LORD is their strength." You know the beautiful picture by Watts of Sir Galahad leading forth his horse to battle, wearing his armour, glorious in his young, joyous strength.

> "My strength is as the strength of ten,
> Because my heart is pure."

And therefore I put it to the young man or young woman here who has not the joy of strength whether we are really meant to be weak people, "driven about by every wind of doctrine," beaten down by every temptation. We are meant to be young knights clothed in all the glorious strength of JESUS CHRIST, going forth conquering and to conquer. We must aim at the joy of strength.

And how are we to get it? That is my last question. And so we come round to the HOLY SPIRIT again. The fruit of the SPIRIT is joy at every point: it is the SPIRIT that gives us this fivefold gift; it is the SPIRIT that takes CHRIST and brings Him home to our hearts. He smites our hearts with the Cross, as Moses smote the hard rock with his rod and brought out the water; so the waters of penitence flow forth from the stricken soul that is smitten with the Cross. It is the HOLY SPIRIT that brings JESUS with Him for companionship. "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you"; and then He explained that He comes again in the power of the HOLY SPIRIT. "I will send the Comforter"; the HOLY SPIRIT brings JESUS with Him; the HOLY SPIRIT fills us with the power and the joy of service; it is the wind of the SPIRIT that fills the sails of the ship as it goes across the ocean of life; it is the HOLY SPIRIT that makes us grow. Are you all confirmed here? If not, why not? The HOLY SPIRIT

—as you will see, if you read Acts viii. 15-17—falls upon us in confirmation. "When they were come down, they prayed for them, that they might receive the HOLY GHOST (for as yet He was fallen on none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the LORD JESUS). Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the HOLY GHOST." We want Him to fall on all of us. It is the HOLY SPIRIT that gives us strength. Confirmation means strengthening, and the one thing that we most want is to have strength. "Come, HOLY GHOST, our souls inspire; come, Thou HOLY SPIRIT, come from Thy celestial home; come and bring us joy, come and bring us this fivefold joy, that so, bright and strong and happy, we may go forth to fight the battle of GOD, and, after the battle, with the light and the joy of battle in our eyes, we may have the joy of heaven at last."

CHURCH HOUSE

MONDAY AFTERNOON

Addressed to a Thousand Girls

VI

THE BARREN FIG-TREE

HOW inadequate we must feel when we ask ourselves how we can liberate the magnificent forces which there are in this hall for the good of the world! I do not suppose it is possible to exaggerate what this hall holds of comfort and ability and strength and inspiration, which, if God only helps us to liberate it this afternoon, shall flow forth into the Diocese of London. And what I want you to have in your mind is a picture which I have had very much in mine since I read an excellent paper upon "The Barren Fig-Tree," by the Bishop of Stepney, in his book upon the Parables. I picture to myself God coming round at a time like this to the trees one by one which He has planted in His vineyard, and I ask myself, as He comes up to one of you, whom, as I shall show presently, He has planted and watered and taken care of in such an extraordinary way, "What is the fruit that He will expect to find upon you for

the good and the comfort of His children who are in the world?"

The first thing He will certainly expect to find upon every one of you is *the fruit of faith.* The world is sadly wanting in faith to-day. You see it by many marks and many signs: you see it in the number of people who used to go to church every Sunday morning who never go to church now; you will find doubt lurking in the conversation of the very man who takes you in to dinner; you will find it in the troubled eyes of your own brother at Oxford or Cambridge, or some other University; you will even see it sometimes, most pathetic of all, in the schoolboy who forms part of your family at home. Now, GOD always helps the world mediately—that is to say, He uses someone to help someone else. That is the whole idea of a pleading ministry, the whole idea of His Church, and therefore He comes up to you, perhaps the elder sister or the friend of the one who wants faith so much, and He expects to find in you the fruit of faith, that He may help with it the person who has no faith.

Now, the first question I want to ask you is, Have you got faith? Or, when He comes to you, as JESUS came up to the fig-tree in the old days, will He find leaves only? I may be speaking to some who have hardly realised up to now the value of faith. I was imploring your brothers at Oxford only a few months ago to cherish as the most valuable thing that they had the mustard-seed of faith, because, although it was but a little mustard-seed then, it might grow into a great tree, under which other souls could come and rest for their comfort. Is it possible that I am speaking to some of you who have tossed away the best thing you have got?

or are you passing now, as I have known so many at your age, through a time of great doubt, puzzling over things, hardly daring to speak to anyone about them? Are you, perhaps, this afternoon, although you have come to the meeting, in despair about your faith? I would like to say a word to encourage you in the growth of this great thing the world wants, that you may not disappoint GOD when He comes to you and looks for the fruit of faith. And I would say, if you are going through doubts and difficulties, do not despair. Numbers of us have been through them all before. Stay with the Church, as St. Thomas stayed with the Church in his time of doubt. They did not turn him out. He wanted light, and they kept him with them; he stayed with the Church, and he saw a revelation of our risen LORD. Do not imagine—and these are merely, so to speak, short arguments, just to stay your impulsiveness or your rashness in throwing away your faith—do not imagine that Gladstone and Lord Salisbury and Westcott and Temple and Professor Stokes had no reason for being the simple, earnest, believing Christians that they were. They knew a great deal more than your sceptical friend who has been trying to laugh away your faith. And therefore I say, Come back to the task of cultivating the most precious thing the Father who planted you in His garden expects to find on you. You will disappoint the whole world if they come up to you and find no faith, and not least that boy who loves you so much at home; you are the one to whom he tells his secrets; over and over again have I found that it is the sister who is in his secrets. And therefore come back, ask someone whom you trust to help you in your doubts and difficulties. Cultivate your faith. So often it is not any special perplexity

or doubt ; it is simply carelessness. We do not cultivate our faith. We have to cultivate a plant in our gardens if we want it to grow ; we leave our faith to grow itself. I always love that story of the little boy in London who was seen on a dark, foggy day flying his kite, and they said to him, "What have you got there?" They only saw the string and the stick. He said, "I have got my kite." "How do you know?" they asked ; "you cannot see it now." "But I can feel it pull," he replied. And one of the reasons why we summon you here to launch with greater effect than ever the Girls' Diocesan Association is that we want you to feel your faith pull, we want to give it something to do. My own faith is twenty times as strong as it was twenty years ago, because I have made my faith pull. I have seen it act. I have seen the Gospel in action in every phase of society. And therefore I know it is true, because I have tested it over and over again. We want you to test your faith. I have found faith come back to Oxford men who came to the Oxford House in the old days over and over again, not from any special argument, but because they tested their faith and used it ; and because they used it, it grew stronger. I heard a touching story only yesterday, and I do not mind repeating it in public. A man was converted in St. Paul's Cathedral by watching the reverent faith of the choir boys. Now, I call it a most splendid and touching thing that those lads, by their extraordinary reverence, their excellent training, their attention to the service, their reverent service rendered to God, exercised that influence upon a man who was present in the cathedral, and he has now given up his life to Christ and is seeking to be ordained. Before we leave the subject of faith, do let us try and put into

practice what Miss Soulsby, in that useful book "Lent Thoughts," has put before us, that even though we are personally sad, we must all, everyone, as priests with morning hearts and morning faces, take our places at the altar of the world's great morning sacrifice.

Then, secondly, the FATHER looks to find *hope* on you.

> "Hope rules a land for ever green;
> The powers that serve that bright-eyed queen
> Are confident and gay.
> Points she to aught, the bliss draws near,
> And fancy rules the way."

As I read over the beautiful things which poets have said about hope, I think that they would have said something stronger if they had seen hope at work, as we who work in the slums, or have worked in the slums, have seen it. I look upon hope as one of the strongest influences in the world. What does that tired clergyman want, who has been toiling on for thirty years in the slums? He wants someone to come to him and help him who is full of hope, full of high spirits, full of confident hope in a GOD of love. What does that young man want who started work, and who is almost breaking down because his work is so successful? (And one of the saddest things is to see the breaking down of the successful worker because there is not sufficient help given him.) He wants some young helper, man or woman, to come full of hope to do the work he cannot do. How can he manage the Band of Hope, and the Mothers' Meetings, and the Men's Club, and do all his visiting by himself? He cannot do it. I see my men break down time after time from hoping for help that never comes. Or what does that poor woman want, week after week, in the slums? Let me tell you of two real people, with

their real names, who are both in Paradise now. I have never mentioned their real names until to-day. I found Jane Crease and Dick Ede in the slums in the East End. One had been in pain—Jane Crease—for something like fifteen or sixteen years, and she was left absolutely alone, except for a hard-working father and mother, who did their best for her, but with no friends, and with nothing to do all day, lying there in the little street in which she lived. I can remember my first visit, and how she welcomed me, when I took on the parish work as Rector of Bethnal Green. I raised up people like yourselves to go down and bring hope to that poor girl. After about twelve months I remember going in—of course, I had been going in every week to see her—but on one particular visit, when some friends had been down to cheer her up and read to her, I remember her waving her hand round to her photographs and saying with a smile on her face: "It is a changed life to me, Mr. Ingram; you see I have all my friends here with me." "My life is changed now, and I owe all these friends to you." Now, the last five years of that little woman's life was a different thing, because she was surrounded by hopeful people, who came with bright faces to tell her about this and that. We used to carry her into Bethnal Green Parish Church for her Communions when she could not move; and by the hope of the Church her life was changed. She died about five years afterwards, bright and happy to the last. Dick Ede was long dying of consumption in that slow way which lasts for years. I took in to him my young brothers from the Oxford House. How many a young clergyman to-day has been educated by Dick Ede! how many a one has, at his first pastoral visit, learnt from that boy his patience and other lessons which he had never learnt

before! One would go and teach Dick drawing, another would go and read to him; and that boy, although he would have been brave anyhow, yet for the last eight years had his life cheered by the hope, the talk, and the company of his young brothers.

Now, when I think over this great diocese, and of the hopeless ones in it, of the solitary and the lonely, and the troubled lying there without anyone to cheer them from morning to night, and then look at a hall like this, crammed with hope, I say, "GOD expects you to give your hope to the hopeless." It is what He has grown you for. And I am perfectly certain that you will not disappoint GOD.

And I might here put in the close connection between purity of character and hope. "He that hath this hope purifieth himself, even as CHRIST is pure." It would be impossible to say how the work of hope that you, please GOD, will do, is connected with your own purity of character. If you fail that schoolboy brother who looks upon you as impeccable; if you disappoint that man to whom perhaps you are the ideal of what a woman should be—then crash go down all their strength and all their hope and all their inspiration. You inspire the world, and you fill the world with hope, because everyone believes that you are living in the pure sunshine of the presence of GOD.

And that brings me to speak of the third fruit the FATHER would pluck from the young tree for the good of the world, and that is the *fruit of love*—that wonderful miracle-worker which we call love, the unselfishness which is the only possible way of convincing the world that CHRIST ever came into it. How well I remember asking a dying man in the London Hospital what made him believe first in CHRIST! "Since Mr. So-and-so came to live down here"—that is what convinced him.

He had heard all about brotherhood before, but never believed in it. And it is that love which takes in the unattractive and the ugly, that love which braves sordid surroundings because it is part of the love of CHRIST—it is that love which the FATHER expects to find in you. And is not He justified in looking for it? "What more could I have done for My vineyard than I have done for it?" He says, as He looks down on a group of English girls. I do not suppose that any girls in the world ever held such a splendid position as a girl in England holds to-day; think of her glorious freedom, the splendid trust and confidence of the English home, the church everywhere to which she can go, the training from her earliest years in Church principles and religion, the field of service always open to develop her character, the excellent schools available to back up the home training—"What more could I have done for My vineyard than I have done for it?" GOD well may ask. And therefore it is that the FATHER expects to find fruit upon His trees.

And that brings me, in the last place, to ask: If this is so, if faith and hope and love are looked for upon all of you by GOD, that He may pluck them for the good of the world, what is the good of our Girls' Diocesan Association? I can imagine someone saying, "Yes, this is quite true, but we can do all this by ourselves"; or, "this is quite true, but I do all I possibly can at present; why join an association at all?" But I answer by another question. Why did JESUS CHRIST form His Church? why did He not leave each individual person to work out his own salvation by himself? We find that He spent infinite pains and infinite time in forming the Divine society which we call His Church. Why? He did it—if we may reverently answer that question—He did

it for these reasons: First, He did it because people working together are tenfold the strength of what they are one by one; we add power to one another by working together. Secondly, He did it that one might enthuse the other in their work. Thirdly, He did it that it might be an organised society, covering the whole ground, so that Christian work might not be a series of overlapping agencies, which only get in one another's way. Fourthly, He did it that spiritual work might be according to the spirit of order, perfectly regular, like a beautiful spiritual machine. And, fifthly, He did it to bind the whole society to Himself. Now, if you ask me that question, I give you a similar answer. We form this association because all of you working together in a society are ten times the force which you would be by yourselves; we form it that you may enthuse one another. I know something of what girls can do when they work. I wrote a little article about six years ago in the *Girls' Realm*, and that little article about what girls could do has blossomed into the "Girls' Guild of Service," three thousand strong, with members in every part of the world. Those girls give a thousand pounds a year out of their own money to help other girls to get out into the world, especially those of their own class who are poor. They keep cots in hospitals in different parts of the world. And all that has been accomplished in five or six years' time. The Guild was started by that short article, but has been excellently worked by Mr. Leader, of the *Girls' Realm* paper. Now, I own that I feel a little envious, honestly and rightly envious, of what that Girls' Guild of Service can do. I am proud of being founder and president, but I want my Girls' Diocesan Association to be something ten times as big as it is now. Two hundred and fifty girls out of the whole

of London in the Girls' Diocesan Association! It ought to roll into its thousands. You, too, ought to have trust funds to administer to help on other girls in our great city; you, too, ought to be keeping cots for the poor in the different hospitals. It is a nucleus of a strong movement which can cover the ground, and the reason, or one of the reasons, why we have met to-day is to raise it from two or three hundred at any rate into a thousand—we hope within a year.

So, again, the association exists for organisation. I do not think there is anyone that I know cleverer than Miss Synge, the secretary of this Guild, in the way in which she manages to find a job for everybody I send to her. I know how my head used to ache at Oxford House to find a job for every undergraduate who came down to spend his holidays in Bethnal Green. But the secretary has never failed yet; everyone has had a suitable bit of work found for her within a week. Is that not better than fumbling about to find your own work, and perhaps finally starting something which is about a hundred yards off some other work? We must have organisation; we must have order in the Church, and we do ten times the work if the whole of our work is organised. I knew an old lady once, in the first parish where I was a curate, who managed by a little skill to get seventeen blankets at Christmas. We do not want to have pampered parishes which have got all the workers, but we want organisation which will give everyone a chance.

And, then, I am specially asked to say this. Although I only have what position I have as the representative of the great Head of the Church, it is the desire of the Girls' Diocesan Association to have a personal relation to their Bishop, that they may feel that they are personally helping him in his work.

And therefore I look to you to be my "Light Brigade"—we have all learnt by heart "The Charge of the Light Brigade"—and I want to have you under my orders, to fling you this way and that as I want you for the great battle in London ; and I do most earnestly pray that the outcome of this meeting will be that more of you will join our association, and through it offer your faith, your hope, your love for the good of the world.*

* There were 1,000 girls at this meeting in the Great Hall, and an overflow of 250 in the Town Hall. Large numbers joined the association after the meeting.

ST. PANCRAS

SUNDAY MORNING

VII

THE LEADING OF THE SPIRIT

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."—Rom. viii. 14.

WE are concentrating our whole minds and hearts on the work, the Person, and the power of the Holy Spirit. Week by week on Sunday mornings we are taking one special work of the Holy Spirit, and week by week on the weekdays a special fruit of the Holy Spirit, and on Sunday afternoons the ways by which we can resist the Holy Spirit. We have dwelt upon the work of the Holy Spirit in convicting the world of sin; unless the Holy Spirit does that first, unless the Holy Spirit strips from us our self-esteem, our self-complacency, the blindness which the good opinion of our friends winds round our eyes—it is impossible that He can lead us into the land of righteousness. And that was why we have offered up a prayer that the preliminary work may be done; that even now those who are living in self-esteem, still saying to themselves, "So-and-so

thinks well of me, therefore I cannot be so bad," may go on their knees at the end of the service, and say, "LORD, have mercy upon me; CHRIST, have mercy upon me; LORD, have mercy upon me."

The HOLY SPIRIT cannot lead us on until He has first convinced us of our sins. But when He has convinced us, what a specially beautiful message there is for us: "As many as are led by the SPIRIT of GOD, they are the sons of GOD." In other words, the leading of the SPIRIT is like a bright and beautiful guide, who guides and leads us from step to step. This is the work of the SPIRIT we are now to consider —the work of "leading." That GOD leads us, and does not drive, is the explanation of many of the difficulties that have been sent up to me. Why are there sin and evil in the world? What was the necessity of the Incarnation? Why the astounding miracle of the Atonement? What is the good of the Church? The answer to every one of these questions is that GOD leads and does not drive. I remember so well in the old East End days, when the young men of the boating club connected with the Oxford House came to ask about their rowing on Sunday morning, and I explained to them that I could not remain their president if their club races were held on Sunday morning; that it was impossible for me to commit myself to the principle that Sunday morning was the time for a boat-race, but that I had no right, as president or head of Oxford House, to dictate to them as individuals what they should do, for I lived down there to try and lead them to better ways of spending Sunday morning; and the deputation, with that perfect frankness and trust which they always gave me, looked up and said: "We quite understand, Mr. Ingram: you have come down here to lead us, and not to drive

us." They could not have hit off the work of a priest of GOD, if he works faithfully in the spirit of GOD, more perfectly straight than that. GOD also leads us, and does not drive us. That is why sin is in the world ; that is why GOD does not lift up His almighty power and make us good in a moment, because He would break His own image in us. Our free, personal spirits make us like GOD, who is Himself a free, personal Spirit. And therefore He wins, He persuades, He pleads, He does everything to make us, with our own wills, choose the good—but He forces us, never. To force us is to break His own image in us, and to render fruitless His long toil for our good.

And so the Incarnation, the Atonement, the Church, are all part of GOD's leading. It may seem (and it has been so criticised) a cumbrous way to save the world for the SON of GOD to come down into the world to save it. People have said: "Can you believe that that tremendous thing we are told of, the Atonement, happened on this earth of ours?" I say "Yes," because I believe in the unfathomable love of GOD, and that GOD will stop at nothing, at absolutely nothing, to try to save the children whom He has made. And so with the Church—the Divine society which has come down to our day, which has gathered you here in this very church to-day—the Church is a pleading Church ; GOD trusts to a pleading ministry. The clergy who knock at your door and invite you to come to church are part of the pleading ministry. The sermons that are preached here, the appeals that are made to you, are part of the pleading of GOD through His Church. He leads, and He will not, and never will, drive.

And that brings us quite naturally to the leading of the HOLY SPIRIT. "May Thy loving SPIRIT lead me

forth into the land of righteousness." How does the HOLY SPIRIT lead ?

First of all, He leads—and notice the solemnity of what I say now—He leads by stirring up, it may be, only a fluttering desire at first—a fluttering, feeble desire to be a better man or a better woman. I was speaking to two yesterday who came to see me in connection with the Mission. They had through the Mission received a fluttering, feeble desire to return to better things from the utter indifference into which they had fallen. And there may be some in this great congregation on whom the HOLY SPIRIT is beginning, even this morning, this first work. He is stirring up something on which He may lay hold, something on which He can put His loving hand, to grasp them, and so lead them on in this Mission into the land of righteousness. If this, my brother, is the first time you have been in church for months ; if you, my sister, have fallen—like the two I saw yesterday, almost into atheism—then do not forget : "Quench not the SPIRIT." That gentle stirring of a desire is the first leading of the SPIRIT in regard to you. I remember a story that I used to tell to the poor and uneducated people among whom in the old days I used so often to hold Missions, but I think it will appeal even to this much better educated congregation which we have here to-day. It is an old-world story of a village which had in it a clump of thick trees, and in the midst of this clump there dwelt a dove ; and it was the custom for the villagers when they went out to fight, or when some young man was starting on his career, or some little child was in trouble, having, perhaps, broken a pitcher at the well, to go into the grove of trees and listen to the voice of the dove, and all was happy and well in that village for years. But at last a bad phase came

over the village. It took to drink and evil-speaking, quarrels filled it, and the voice of the dove became fainter and fainter. And at last a little child came out crying and said that the dove had gone. Then great misfortune came upon that village: they were defeated in their local fights, and worse and worse became their condition. At last they went to consult an old hermit who lived near the village, and asked him what they were to do; and he said: "There is only one thing to do: lay aside all this by which you have degraded your village life and driven your dove away. Perchance, if you fast and pray, that dove will come back into the middle of your village." They took his advice, and one spring morning a child ran out brightly from the grove and said the dove had come back. And, as we sang to-day:

> "Return, O Holy Dove, return,
> Sweet Messenger of rest;
> I hate the sins which made Thee mourn,
> And drove Thee from my breast,"

I thought of that story. The dove had not gone, it turned out, but had only been silenced among the trees. If you are hearing this morning a gentle fluttering within you, a soft voice of someone speaking in your heart, it is the Holy Dove of God, the Holy Dove which is trying to win you back from your selfishness to better things; it is the first leading of the Spirit. For God's sake do not silence the Spirit of God again.

And then, secondly, the Holy Spirit leads us by the example and by the influence of those whom we love and trust on earth. There is many a sister in London who is pleading with her brother to-day, and who is the minister and vehicle of the Holy Spirit to him. There is many an older man who is trying un-

selfishly to warn a boy about the bad ways into which he has fallen, and through him the HOLY SPIRIT is speaking. There is many a mother who is sending up most earnest prayer, perhaps in some far-off country village, for the boy who has come to London to work; and through that mother the power of the SPIRIT is working upon him. Her influence, her letter, the letter home to her which he will write this afternoon, the letter which he knows she will expect to-morrow, are all working upon him. Even though she cannot see him, by pleading for him she is leading him, and the HOLY SPIRIT is leading that young man through her.

And therefore I come to my second question this morning. Look back into your own private lives. Is there someone, now, who has brought you here to-day? is there someone who has over and over again said to you, "Why have you given up your prayers? why have you given up church altogether?" He calls you by your Christian name. He says, "Come round this morning—come round to the Mission"; and his influence is strong upon you, it is the best influence that you have. My brother, my sister, that is the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD who is leading you through that person. "Resist not the SPIRIT." One day, when all is over, and you go up to render your great account, it will be recorded in Heaven that the HOLY SPIRIT was leading you through that sister, through that friend, through that mother, through that brother, and that you had on that particular morning, instead of yielding to the leading of the SPIRIT, resisted the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD. "Ye do always resist the HOLY GHOST: as your fathers did, so do ye." GOD grant that that awful verdict may not be recorded against any of us to-day!

Then, thirdly, the HOLY SPIRIT leads us by taking

of CHRIST and showing Him to us. I was speaking a few days ago to four hundred of my West End clergy, and we took this for the subject of our meditation: "Our First Love." "This I have against thee, because thou hast left thy first love." And I said: "You remember what first led us to be ordained; you remember that we fell in love with JESUS CHRIST—we fell in love with His unselfishness, His unworldliness, His love for the poor, His courage, His generosity. But who made us fall in love with JESUS CHRIST? Who alone can take of CHRIST and show Him to us? The HOLY SPIRIT leads by making holiness attractive, by showing the difference between the life of JESUS CHRIST and the life of the selfish, ungenerous man of the world; by pointing out how much more beautiful a thing it is to be like CHRIST at heart, like CHRIST in the city, like CHRIST among our friends, than like the selfish, lustful man who is not led by that SPIRIT at all." Are you beginning to see that, my brother? is it beginning to dawn upon you that this beautiful life of JESUS CHRIST, lived out in the city, lived out in the home, is the most winning thing in the world, and that you would like to be like that—that you would like to be unselfish and generous and chivalrous? It is the HOLY SPIRIT who is leading you on, by taking of CHRIST and showing Him to you, and making you feel that you would like, however far off it to-day, to be more like JESUS CHRIST. Oh, let Him lead you on; yield to that soft leading of His SPIRIT; meditate more about it; give more time—give up the morning before the day begins; go down on your knees with your New Testament; ask the HOLY SPIRIT to take the moving picture in those pages and bring it home to you; and before Easter comes He will lead you back, a penitent, a lapsed communicant, it may be, to the blessed Saviour Himself. "As

many as are led by the SPIRIT of GOD, they are the sons of GOD."

So again, fourthly, He leads us on in our prayers. I have come across many who are disheartened in their prayers and meditations. They feel cold and dry. They used to like religion; they used to feel warm and fervent; they feel warm and fervent no more. What are they to do? Give up? No. Let the HOLY SPIRIT lead them in prayer. The HOLY SPIRIT—and what a blessed promise this is!—will pray *in* us, not *for* us, but *in* us, with groanings that cannot be uttered. He will enable us to pray according to the will of GOD; and therefore, instead of despairing, kneel down again with your face bowed between your knees, as Elijah waited, and, although for long the heavens shall seem as brass, though the cry seems to come back, "There is nothing! there is nothing!" as it did to him, yet at last there will be borne upon the breeze to your thirsty soul "the sound of abundant rain." Have patience in prayer; ask the HOLY SPIRIT to pray in you—"Come, HOLY GHOST, my soul inspire"—and He will lead you on from thought to thought, from aspiration to aspiration, from desire to desire, from point to point in your meditation. If we speak, He will give us in each hour what we ought to say; He will give us our message, because He loves to lead us on in prayer and meditation upon the greatness and the love of GOD.

And then, lastly, the HOLY SPIRIT guides us in our daily lives. I remember so well talking to a clergyman years ago about a very difficult parish for which I wanted a man. There was nothing whatever to attract him about it. He was a well-to-do man; he could go anywhere he liked; and here was a parish, far away, of which he knew nothing. The credit of the Church was shipwrecked in it in ways I need not

describe, and after my talk I thought he would not go. I went to St. Paul's Cathedral that Sunday afternoon to preach the sermon, forgetting, I must say, for a moment all about my friend with whom I had been speaking, and preached, if I remember aright, a sermon on this very text, "Led by the SPIRIT." In the evening I got a letter: "Dear Bishop, I am led by the SPIRIT to go." That was all. How I did thank GOD that night on my knees that the HOLY SPIRIT had spoken to him! He did go: he did five years' magnificent work, and, having gone from the right motive, he was helped by the right power. He built up again the credit of that church; he gathered round him a large band of workers; he converted the chief opponent of the Church in that district to be what he is now—an enthusiastic and powerful Church worker. He certainly was led by the SPIRIT to go. Now, what was done for him may be done for every one of us, every man, woman, and child; however humble, however unknown, ordained or unordained, it is all the same—we may be led by the SPIRIT all our lives. Am I to work here in this place? Am I to go to that shop? Am I to stay or not stay at that factory? Am I to take or not to take that line among my fellows? There is the HOLY SPIRIT waiting all the time to show us whether or not, to lead us, to guide us, if we will, in the right course. The loving SPIRIT will lead us forth into the land of righteousness wherever we are.

And therefore my last question this morning is this: My brothers and sisters, are you forfeiting your right to be guided by the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD? are you where you are because you have not asked to be led by the SPIRIT? If you are in some place where you cannot possibly live a Christian life, you must ask the HOLY SPIRIT whether you should not be led to

leave it. You are perhaps this morning hesitating as to this or that line in life. Are you saying to the HOLY SPIRIT, "May thy loving SPIRIT lead me forth?" or are you settling the question on the ground of higher wages, or social distinction, or more comfort? What is the guiding motive of your life to-day? To whom are you handing over the guidance of your life? The HOLY SPIRIT waits to guide you. And so we must make up our minds this morning—do we want to be the sons of GOD indeed? In one sense we are all sons of GOD—sons and daughters by creation; we are also His children by adoption, some of us are further sealed by Confirmation as His children, and some are receiving again and again the children's Bread. But the question is, Are we rising to our sonship? Are we putting it to the proof? Are we, in the fullest sense, children of GOD? Then we must be led by the SPIRIT, for this is the great message of to-day: "As many as are led by the SPIRIT of GOD, those only are the sons of GOD." Let the soft stirring of the SPIRIT in your heart, let the gentle influence of those you love, let the attractiveness of the beauty of holiness, let the devoted and earnest prayers of those who love you, let the work of the SPIRIT in your daily life all lead you on, and then you shall be sons of GOD indeed. And, if you dare not take a bolder prayer upon your lips, take this one which I copied down this morning from that beautiful book on the Parables, which I recommend you all to read for your Lenten reading, by the Bishop of Stepney, written by that humble-minded man, Bishop Stubbs:

"Lead me, Almighty FATHER, SPIRIT, SON;
Whither Thou wilt I follow—no delay.
My will is Thine, and even had I none,
Grudging obedience, still I will obey.

Faint-hearted, fearful, doubtful, if I be,
Gladly or sadly, I will follow Thee.

"Into the land of righteousness I go,
The footsteps thither Thine, and not my own.
JESUS, Thyself the way, alone I know;
Thy will be mine, for other have I none.
Unprofitable servant though I be,
Gladly or sadly, let me follow Thee."

ST. PANCRAS

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Men Only

VIII

GOD'S CURSE ON INDIFFERENCE

"Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."—Judg. v. 23.

I ASKED the Vicar to read part of that wonderful chapter because it is one of the very earliest songs of victory after war that we possess, and if you read it after the eleventh verse when you go home, you will see how vividly it brings to light the terrible danger in which this little nation of Israel found itself. All the members of it did their best to meet the danger; those that could fight came to fight, those that handled the pen of the writer did their part; but there was one that stands on the page of history for ever, Meroz, for Meroz never came at all. It is very much what happened when the call from South Africa came, and the City Imperial Volunteers sprang to their feet and rushed out to South Africa: everybody was used according to

what power they had. The railway-men went on the railway ; the men who understood telegraphy were used in that capacity ; and the C.I.V.'s have left a splendid record. Never shall I forget preaching to them, on their return, in St. Paul's. They showed with what courage and determination men could stand by their country in their country's danger.

Now, I have chosen this text because the curse on Meroz is the curse of God on indifference. And when we ask why God curses indifference, why this bitter curse is rung out over Meroz, in order to answer the question we must put ourselves back among the besieged at Ladysmith. Supposing that we had been there—and I have spoken to many who went through that terrible time—supposing that there was a man in the garrison there who refused to take his part, what would be the five reasons which would make him incur even the curse of the women and children in the garrison ? First of all, there was a battle to fight. We have no concern with the rightness or wrongness of the war when we are fighting a battle in a place like Ladysmith ; clearly, the duty of everyone in that place was to guard the women and children and to hold out till they died. Then, secondly, they were face to face with a strong and powerful foe. In the third place, they had a brave captain who was leading them, and who was doing his very best to inspire his men with courage. In the fourth place, every day at any moment the enemy might have come in like a flood and swept the whole place away. And lastly, the women and children, whom every true-hearted man was bound to protect, were in danger unless each man stood at his post. And therefore I can imagine the kind of curse which would have been uttered over any shirker in the place : "Curse ye that man because he comes not to the help of his

country ; because he stands not by the women and the children in their hour of danger." The indifferent, we all feel, in such circumstances, would have rightly incurred the curse.

Now, as I look round London, I see a most tremendous battle eternally going on. I have got to know of late years more of the inner life of some of the great factories, warehouses, houses of business, than I knew five years ago ; and I know that there is a battle in every one of those great houses such as sometimes we, who are outside of them, seldom suspect. Just imagine what that lad has to bear who hears the filthy talk about women from the men, perhaps the elder men, of the place, who ought to be setting him an example. It is only evidence from place after place that I am absolutely bound to believe that has shown me how strong the battle is, where men and lads are herded together day after day. I have known many a man who has had to stand a positive persecution ; I know now some who are in a terribly hot part of the battle. And I can imagine the Captain who is watching it all, and sees the man, perhaps the foreman, perhaps the elder clerk, who, by his position, is the man to put down that kind of thing, skulking and doing nothing ; and I can almost hear the curse of GOD ring over the man's head, "Curse ye Meroz, curse him because when my little lads are in their day of trial, he comes not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty." Or take that awful battle in which we are ceaselessly engaged in trying to save the girls of London. For the last ten years I have been in touch with the rescue and preventive work of London, and you can imagine what I felt as a man when I found that as fast as the women—noble, unselfish women—were saving the girls off Piccadilly or the Strand, the

men were ruining them. Thank GOD we have begun to alter that. Five great meetings, the last with 3,500 men, have we held from end to end of London, and shall continue to hold them, in order to rally the men of London round the standard of purity and wipe away the disgrace of leaving the whole work to the women. And while I am on this part of the subject, I would rally you, my brothers, round me in what is, surely, the noblest of campaigns, and ask you to help not me—for I am a mere minister of Him whom you must really help—but JESUS CHRIST, who came to destroy the works of the devil, as He tries in our great London to save the souls and preserve the purity of those girls, and to get a spirit into the manhood of London which shall scorn to trample further down even one who has already fallen halfway down the ladder. As CHRIST sees a man who might come and help—not actually by going out into the streets, because we must leave that to the women at nights to save the girls, but who might use his moral influence where he works on the side of purity among men, on the side of chivalry towards women—doing nothing but putting his hands in his pockets, not, perhaps, joining in the talk himself, but letting other people join in it, and for fear of being laughed at saying nothing, then He must utter something like the ancient curse on Meroz, "Curse ye Meroz," saith the angel of the LORD, "because he came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty."

Then, again, remember how short the time is. Someone dies in London every eight minutes day and night, and our turn may so quickly and so easily be the next. It is perfectly certain that we shall die; the living know they shall die, and I do not suppose that many here have wholly given up the conviction that after death cometh

the judgment. Is not there something in us, I ask—and I am not speaking only to those who are regular Churchmen, but to everybody who may have come into this church to-day—is not there something within us which we cannot wholly crush out, which tells us that we have to give an account of ourselves before GOD? It is a fact, whether we believe it or not. These passing years on earth will soon be over, and everyone will have to give an account of himself before the Almighty GOD who has made him, and who has watched him, and who has seen all his life, and who is watching us in this church this afternoon. The time is very short, and the close of every day closes a chance, not merely for those who will die to-day, if such there be, but for each of us. There seems to be a sort of crisis in the soul. The HOLY SPIRIT leads, and the man quenches and resists and grieves Him; then there seems to come a period when the man, at any rate for a time, gives himself away; he crushes the voice of the SPIRIT, and that soul is left to itself. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." Therefore I cannot urge too earnestly upon you that this chance, for what it is worth, may be the only chance you will have; some brother has said, "Come and hear the Bishop this afternoon," and you have come here; you have not been for months in a church or chapel; then it is, remember, the HOLY SPIRIT that has given you this chance this afternoon; it may never come again, never.

Then, thirdly, do we not follow a magnificent Captain? You may have given up religion for a long time, but surely memories will cling to you of what you read as a little boy at school about JESUS CHRIST and what He did; it is not all gone. I have been much touched sometimes when I have gone round to see men who have not been to church for many years. They

have liked me to commend their wife to JESUS; they have even cried out a broken prayer, "JESUS, Master, have mercy upon me," as I have knelt down by the death-bed of their wife; their religion had not all gone. And the splendid thing is that these last fifty years which some people imagine have been doing away with religion have set JESUS CHRIST on a more magnificent pedestal than ever. Even those who despise church and chapel increasingly reverence JESUS CHRIST Himself. I used to find out that when lecturing in the open air. Someone would get up every afternoon to answer me or to ask questions, but I found that the great mass of the working-men—those working-men who have sent so many of their representatives to Parliament—love and honour JESUS CHRIST, however much they may hate church and chapel.

As I think over why it is that the curse of GOD comes down on the indifferent man in St. Pancras who does nothing and cares nothing, it is because there is standing among us One whom we see not, who cries as He cried in the very Gospel for this Sunday: "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth." The man who stands there in the office, in the parish, in the workshop, and who does nothing, is an influence dead against the influence of JESUS CHRIST—an inert friend is counted an enemy. "He that is not with Me is against Me; and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth." Those are His own words.

And then, fourthly, what serried ranks of enemies we have! I think it puts a soldier on his mettle when he sees the enemies that are against him—when he finds, for instance, that what is spent upon the immoral traffic of London runs into millions. We do our best in every railway-station, at every port, to have agents

who shall stop the traffic ; but we are fighting a most gigantic trade, which is backed up by money to an enormous extent. When I think of the dead weight of a leaden public opinion, how almost impossible it is for the young to stand up against a solid public opinion against religion, among which they often have to live ; when I think of the gradual secularisation of Sunday, how fathers, who used always to bring their boys to church on Sunday morning or go to their chapel, spend the whole of Sundays with them playing golf, and never go to any place of worship at all ; when I think of the sceptical article or the sceptical magazine hastily read in the club, with no sort of knowledge in the mind to counteract it and to show the shallowness of it, and when I see all this gradually working mischief among hundreds and thousands to-day—then I look up and say : "Our help is in the name of the LORD, who hath made heaven and earth." Every true soldier has to fight all day when he has such appalling enemies against him. "Curse ye Meroz !" It would not matter so much if the enemies were not so thick on the ground. "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof ; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty."

And then, why does "the sob of the child curse deeper than the strong man in his wrath" ? as Mrs. Browning says in that touching poem "The Cry of the Children." We have an honourable tradition in our Church that we never speak about politics in the pulpit. It is a tradition which, please GOD, we shall never break ; and therefore, whatever political opinions you hold—for I have no doubt that you are men of different political shades of opinion—I content myself with saying that we have come to a crisis in our national

history, and out of the numberless possible solutions we must choose the one which will lead to our children being taught about GOD; otherwise in the future, if we have the children untrained and untaught, the sob of the child will curse deeper than the strong man in his wrath; and every one of us who at this crisis of our national history is doing nothing and caring nothing is not taking his part with the LORD against the mighty.

And when I turn to ask why it is that men who possibly may be among you to-day—and, of course, I know nothing about you individually; I am merely speaking to you as my brother-men of London—why it is that there is so much indifference about religion, I think I could touch one by one, from the many talks I have had with individual men, at least some of the reasons which keep you indifferent.

The first is pure thoughtlessness. A man is very busy at his work—he has a very worrying business, let us suppose, in the City. "I just want Sunday," he says, "to be a day of rest; and as to praying—well, I am not built that way." Many a man has said that to me—"I am not built that way." And so a man, having satisfied himself that he is not built that way, goes on his way with a light heart, and leaves religion on one side. He is not hostile—he likes his children, if he has any, to go to Sunday-school, and thinks it quite right for his wife to go to church; but he leaves his own religion on one side from sheer thoughtlessness. Well, my brother, the Mission comes to you; the little effort I am making through your northern district comes to remind you of facts. I am speaking as a dying man, with a certain measured amount of months or years till I die, to men with a halter also round their necks. You are bound to die, you are bound to be judged, and to be judged one by one. Do

you suppose that your wife's religion is going to save you? Do you suppose your example to your children is not going to tell upon them in time to come? The children always do what they see father do, and pay little attention to what they hear him say. And as to your wife, "no man can deliver his brother, nor make agreement unto GOD for him; for it cost more to redeem their souls, so that he must let that alone for ever." And if you are without wife or child, and will not have to give an account of your influence on them, you are to stand in any case before the judgment-seat of GOD. Then, I say, think of it this afternoon, and do not say you were never reminded of it.

The second reason is a kind of false modesty: "I am not built that way." Let us come back to that. Remember that very striking Old Testament story—and do not tell me that the Old Testament is played out; these Old Testament stories search the conscience as much as they ever did—when all the people gave Aaron their gold earrings, and he put them into the fire. First of all he shaped the gold very carefully, then put it in the fire, and it came out a calf; and when Moses called him to task for what he had done, he gave this remarkable answer, which sounds very like the twentieth century: "Well," he said, "all that happened was this: they gave me this gold, I put it in the fire, and there came out this calf." That was the excuse he gave. He said nothing about having shaped it and moulded it, nothing about the part he had taken in producing the calf. You ought to read a really searching sermon by Bishop Phillips Brooks on "The Golden Calf." No one who has read it will ever forget it. He says that what Aaron said is exactly what an indulgent parent says who, without taking

any real care about his son, sends him to college, pampers every one of his wishes, and then, when someone points to him as a spoilt, miserable creature, protests: "I could not do any more; I have sent him to this school, to that university—I put him in the fire, and there came out this calf." That is practically also what a man says when he makes the excuse, "I am not built that way." Who built you, my brother? There was your boyhood's gold: you came from Heaven; you were made with the capability of being religious; you probably had a good mother who taught you how to pray and to read the Bible; you probably went to a good school; there was almost certainly a church where you lived, and possibly you were confirmed when you were young; and yet, why is it that you have turned out an irreligious man—a man who does not care? And you say: "I am not built that way." Well, you have left out the hand that moulded it all; you have left out the important part—like Aaron. But who was it? It is no good laying the blame on the office, or on the bad set into which you got. You had free will; you had the power to choose the good and refuse the evil; you had the power to go on with your prayers and stay at your church. It is your own hand that has turned you into what you are this afternoon, and therefore false modesty is not an excuse that will avail you at the Day of Judgment. To the man with the one talent, who came forward so cheerfully, and said, "There it is, wrapped up in the napkin," the Judge said: "Thou wicked and slothful servant—thou wicked, because slothful, servant—thou shouldst have lodged it with a banker, that I might receive my own with usury." I would pray you not to shelter yourselves behind that false modesty this afternoon.

God's Curse on Indifference

And then, thirdly, comes your sceptic. There is no one in the world with whom I have more sympathy than with the honest doubter. It is quite true that people often underrate the difficulties there are in religion, and very often in sermons also they are underrated; and therefore, when a man is brought face to face with the question why he believes a tremendous truth like the Incarnation, his faith goes down like a pack of cards; he has never been taught why. It is a terrible struggle. I have been through it myself for months before I could believe with all my mind, conscience, and heart the Christian faith. But that is a very different doubt from that of the man who picks up a few doubts from a magazine, and airs them before boys. This is a very different kind of doubt to that of the man who sets up as a great authority, with a few smatterings of science which he picks up. One of the most striking things is that the princes of science—and I could prove this if I had time—like Professor Stokes, of Cambridge, are at the same time—over and over again you find it—earnest and believing Christians. It is your shallow man, your second-hand man of science, whom you find, time after time, to be sceptical. Bacon said: "A little knowledge inclineth a man's mind to atheism, but much knowledge brings him back again to a belief in GOD." And therefore I would only say to you this afternoon, if it is scepticism, if it is doubt which keeps you from GOD, does not indifference account for your doubt? St. Thomas had doubts, but he stayed with the Church: he waited for light, he looked for light, he prayed for light, and he received his revelation. "If any man do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of GOD"; but not your indifferent man, not the man who does not care.

So, again, another tremendous cause of indifference is sheer procrastination. I often think of the man who was a great swearer, of whom I have already told you.* How common it is for men to put off their repentance to some quiet day, when they think that they are going to sit, as they see their old grandfathers sit, in the chimney corner, until it is too late. "Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." It is a miserable thing to repent in old age when all the life is gone, and you cannot come to the help of the LORD against the mighty, however much you want to do so; it is a miserable thing to have given your life and strength and your powers to the world, and then sneak back to GOD before you die. It is better than never, but it is a poor thing.

And so I come to-day, as your Bishop, as your brother-man, to plead with you to cast away this indifference which, like Meroz, receives the curse, and come forth to a life of glorious service. There never were days more glorious than ours in which to serve; how splendid may be the life of witness! I have known one boy, or one young man, work perfect wonders in a place. Little Meroz has come to the help of the LORD. It is marvellous what can be done; a little one can become a thousand. I have known one man convert his brother officer, and that brother officer convert numbers of others. A life of witness is the first thing to which I call you. I call you, secondly, to a life of prayer. Go down again on your knees, you whom GOD has been shielding and caring for all these years—go down and acknowledge that GOD as true men. You are dependent upon Him for the food you eat and the breath you breathe.

* See page 43.

I summon you to a life of worship. Do not be afraid of showing your colours; go and worship in the church or chapel to which you belong. I summon you to a life of service. There is a battle to fight, there is a guerdon to gain, the reward of it all. Strike a blow for GOD and the right before you die. Do something to make the wretched better; help on a little bit the lot of the children who are coming after us; make it easier for the boys to live a good life than it is; do something to shield that struggling girl to-day. And, if you join the great battle, and in your own particular way come to the help of the LORD against the mighty, then you need not be afraid to meet your Captain. However little we seem to do, He recognises that little, and when the battle is over there comes the "Come up!" and the "Well done!" as an East End working-man said the other day at the end of the day's work.

ST. PANCRAS

WEDNESDAY EVENING

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. The first question is from one who signs herself "A Girl in the North"—"Am I wrong in wanting to die?"

She takes up the answer to many of the questions reported at previous stages of the Mission as to what happens after death. I think it is really morbid in the young to be longing to die. My belief is that life here was meant to be the foretaste of the life to come. "Surely it is heaven upon earth," says Bacon, "when a man's mind rests in Providence, moves in charity, and turns upon the poles of truth." Heaven upon earth! And therefore we children of God are meant to enjoy here a foretaste of the happiness hereafter, and I cannot help thinking that the one who asks that question has not got quite the right view of life. I am quite with the questioner—and I think I shall show that in a few minutes in my sermon—that the terror of death is absolutely wrong for a Christian. But that is a very different thing from a morbid longing to die. We ought to be ready to die when we are called upon to die, but ready to live on quite happily and cheerfully while we are called upon to live here. St. Paul says: "It is better to depart and be with Christ, which is far better." We are quite right in believing that the full and perhaps perfect life comes hereafter, yet we should be enjoying the sunshine of the life of God here, and not have a morbid longing to die.

2. The second question is about being very tired at night, when sleep comes on and therefore makes reading and praying very difficult.

I am certain of this, that we ought not to leave our evening devotions until the moment when we are so utterly wearied that we have no mind or heart to pray. Of course some are obliged to do that, but I am sure that those who have any sort of control of their time do well to get their time of evening prayer, say, just before their evening meal, when the brain and the mind are wakeful; and then, when they retire for the night, they can say, it may be, the briefest prayer, with which they commend themselves to God's keeping and trust themselves to God's care for the night. It is a mistake, in other words, to leave the work of praying till the brain and heart are so fagged out that we cannot pray.

3. Then comes the question, "Why does God keep the devil in existence?" by one who signs himself "Anti-Agnostic."

We have answered that in other words once or twice during the Mission. God will not crush free will, whether it is the free will of the devil or the free will of man; and therefore, if, as we saw the other night, Satan is a fallen spirit—a spirit, that is to say, who once was good, but, having a free will to use, used that free will wrongly, and therefore is a fallen spirit—God will not crush the free will of Satan any more than He will crush the free will of man. When the Almighty creates anybody with free will—spirit, or man, or woman—He so far limits His power for the time, because He is dealing with a free spirit like Himself. As we have seen, He persuades, He wins, He goes on trying to draw the will round to love Him freely; but He will never drive.

4. Then comes the question from someone who is praying very hard for the conversion of one whom she loves. "Is she promised," that is the question, "an answer?"

Certainly, we are positively promised an answer. But we must remember that awful limitation of St. John: "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye shall pray for it." You remember the passage? In other words, it seems to hint—what we might have supposed—that there is a limit even to the power of intercession. Intercession gets, as it were, a leverage upon a soul, but even intercession cannot break down, for certain, a free will that turns against GOD. There must be some of whom it is true, "They have both seen and hated Me and My FATHER." If you can imagine a soul in that state, pray on for it. We have to hope on. The Church has never laid down that even Judas Iscariot was eternally damned. And therefore, while we pray on and hope on for that soul of whom the writer speaks, we must remember that there is this limitation told us by St. John: "There is a sin unto death; I do not say that ye shall pray for it."

5. "Is it necessary to feel CHRIST's presence in the Holy Communion?"

Over and over again, we must repeat: Religion is not feeling. Your religion does not depend upon whether you feel warm in prayer; it does not depend upon whether you feel the Presence in the Holy Communion. In the Holy Communion the Presence is there, whether you feel it or not. The sun is there, whether the clouds are between you and it or not. And therefore there is no more hopeless religion—I mean hopeless from the point of view of being miserable—than the religion that depends upon feeling. The man and woman who go on praying, and come to Communion without any feeling, are often offering most acceptable service to CHRIST, because it is the will that is doing it; the patient attitude seeks Him; the hand seeks Him; the mind seeks Him. Pray on, as I have said, as Elijah prayed. Persevere in prayer.

6. "Why do we have no sign to encourage us?" another

asks. "My experience is," the writer says, "that when you want help you do not get it."

No doubt we have to go on for a long time, sometimes in faith, with no sign. You remember how the Jews always asked for a sign, and no sign was given to them. And therefore we must not look too much for signs. We must go on believing by faith that God will be justified in His sayings at last. While I say this, I believe, on the other hand, that we do have signs, and I ask myself why our Lord instituted the Sacraments. I should say they were meant to be signs, just as when we shake hands with a man our shaking hands with him is an outward and visible sign of our friendship. When Naaman was told to go and wash in the Jordan, the washing was the outward and visible sign of healing. When our Lord put clay upon the eyes of the blind man and told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam, the clay and the washing were the outward and visible signs of what He was doing for him. And therefore when I find in the Church that there is water in Baptism, the laying on of hands in Confirmation, and the bread and wine in Holy Communion, it is exactly what I should expect—the outward and visible signs of the inward and invisible and spiritual grace. I believe that all these things are meant to help our faith, that God gave to the visible world, as far as He could, outward and visible signs of His friendship and His love. And therefore when a child is brought to Baptism, the Baptism is, among other things, a sign of God's love. When we kneel for Confirmation, the hand laid upon us is a sign: "Then laid they their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost, for as yet He was fallen upon none of them." And when I come to Holy Communion, and the blessed symbols are placed in my hands; then I believe that the bread and wine are to me the Body and Blood of Christ, they are signs to convey to me the strength and power of Christ. And therefore I do not admit that we have no sign. And yet, in spite

of these signs, we have to go on our way in faith, if for a time our prayers seem to receive no answer.

7. I have some passages of Scripture put to me which I explain very rapidly, because it so happens that the writer in two out of the three passages has not looked at the Revised Version. One is St. Matt. xix. 16, 17: "What is meant by CHRIST'S saying, 'Why callest thou Me good?' How is that consistent with the fact that He is said to be the SON of GOD?"

There is another translation of this passage, which runs: "Why askest thou Me concerning that which is good?" but if, as is probable, the oldest version of the reputed saying was "Why callest thou Me good?" we must believe that our LORD tried to make the young man think what goodness really meant, and not to use the term in a light and thoughtless way. Instead of the usual salutation, "Rabbi," the young man had said, "Good Master"; and it was part of our LORD'S method of teaching to take what a man said and draw out what underlay it. Our belief in our LORD'S sinlessness rests not on any isolated passage, but on the total impression made by His character—His whole attitude towards sin and sinners, *e.g.*, as in His saying: "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?"

8. "What is blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST?"

I may take with that a question about the unpardonable sin. We always find a number of people who fear that they have sinned by blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST. To sin against the HOLY GHOST—to sin the unpardonable sin—is to say, "Evil, be thou my good." It is to sell yourself to evil; it is to make evil your good; to like it, and not to mind having it, and not to want anything else. Anyone can see that is a hopeless state of mind while it lasts. And, therefore, if any here are miserable because they think that they have sinned the unpardonable sin, it is a clear sign they have not done it. The person who has sinned the unpardonable sin is the person who feels no compunction whatever, or fear, or terror about it.

9. "What is 'the foolishness of preaching'? (1 Cor. i. 21)."

Here, again, you want a little knowledge of the Greek. It is the folly of the thing preached, not the foolishness of the preaching, that is referred to. The Cross was to the Greeks foolishness and to the Jews a stumbling-block, and therefore the passage practically means exactly the same as that in which St. Paul speaks of the Cross as "to the Greeks foolishness." It is the thing preached that is supposed to be folly.

10. "I cannot feel as if God is a real Person."

That, my brother, or my sister, is why God became incarnate. The Incarnation is God's answer to the doubts of His children. Of course, we could not feel that God was a Person if there had been no Incarnation, and therefore, as Dr. Liddon says, "my Christianity safeguards my Theism." But now that God has come into the world in the Person of Jesus Christ, cannot you feel that God is a Person? "He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father," Christ says. As I kneel down at my prayer-desk in the morning, I feel I am praying to someone like Jesus Christ—loving, gentle, drawing, winning. Surely, after the Incarnation we can think of God as a Person.

11. "Is it 'In the name of Jesus,' or 'At the name of Jesus'?" (Phil. ii. 10).

"In the name of Jesus" is the right translation. It does not take away the idea that we should bow *at* the name of Jesus; but "in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow" is the right translation of that passage.

12. "How can you say, 'I know'?"

I think the writer alludes to something I said in my sermon on Sunday.* Well, of course, when we say we know, we are not talking of mathematical knowledge; but we know by faith. Faith is a real faculty of the apprehension. We are only saying what St. John meant

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* See pp. 72-82.

when he said : "We know that our fellowship is with the FATHER and with His SON JESUS CHRIST." We know by verification and experience. One person might be wrong when he thought he was in touch with JESUS CHRIST, but twenty million cannot be ; and when kings, queens, men of science, and peasants all bear witness that they have tested the great hypothesis, and found it true, it is by an accumulation of evidence that we know that "our fellowship is with the FATHER and with His SON JESUS CHRIST."

13. Three more questions were sent up to me as I came into church, which I have hardly had time to read. One is : "What is the meaning of healing the sick, when a Bishop is told to 'hold up the weak and heal the sick' ?"

The whole of that question is occupying our minds a great deal at the present time, and I feel convinced that we priests and Bishops have not to the full realised that when we go to visit our sick people we should pray for their recovery. It does not mean that doctors should not be called in, but that we should also pray for the definite recovery of the sick person, and lay our hands upon them for that object, also using, as I believe, to help that recovery, every means that science and medical skill can contrive. That is all I feel, at the present moment, justified in saying in answer to that question.

14. "What did I mean by saying 'GOD would not destroy His own image' ?"

I explained that just now—that our free will is GOD's image, and if you break anyone's free will, you break GOD's image. I should have thought that perfectly clear. If I have free will, and somebody forces me to be either good or bad, it breaks the best thing in me—the most GOD-like thing—my free will. I do not think that is very difficult.

The last person expostulates with me on the answer which I gave to the question, "Once a Christian, always a Christian," and says : "Surely, if you have once been converted and brought to CHRIST you never can fall away."

I do not see that that is the teaching of the Church or the New Testament at all. It is quite true that it is a blessed thing to be brought to CHRIST, and I said in my answer that it was like being in a lifeboat. But you have to stay in the lifeboat when you are there; and we are told in the New Testament: "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." I pray GOD that no one here who has been brought to CHRIST by baptism will ever leave the lifeboat; but in warning human souls I should not be doing my duty if I did not say there was a possibility that even those who had been brought into the closest relation to CHRIST might fall away. Otherwise, what did St. Paul mean when he said: "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest by any means when I have preached to others I myself should be a castaway"?

ST. PANCRAS

WEDNESDAY EVENING

IX

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: PEACE

"The fruit of the Spirit is peace."—Gal. v. 22.

WE can hardly have listened to all the questions and intercessions which have been sent up to us without feeling what a wonderful thing peace is in the world, what a gift it is, and how much this gift is wanted. Just think of some of the causes which those questions and requests for intercession have revealed as disturbing peace. There are those who are under the terror of death, whose peace and quietness are constantly disturbed by thinking "Some day I shall have to die." The fear of death is always disturbing their peace. Then, again, there are those whose peace is constantly spoilt by the thought of their sin. How can any soul, for instance, to-night—and what we are going to ask for to-night as the special gift for St. Pancras is the gift of peace—how, I ask, can any soul go back in peace to-night who is going back with unforsaken sin upon his conscience? It is absolutely impossible. And therefore a haunting sense of sin breaks up peace. Then, again, family worries and

troubles of which we have had a specimen in one of the intercessions to-night—quarrels in families with brothers and sisters, with those who ought to be the best of friends—the bitterness of long-standing quarrels breaks up the peace of home and household. There may be some who know bitterly that this is exactly the case with the home from which they have come to-night. Then there is the breach of peace in parish life through jealousy between Church workers, jealousy between those who are working for the same cause; over and over again you find it breaking up and spoiling the happiness of Church work. Then, again, there is the anxiety about those we love. How many a mother there is who is perfectly miserable because her boy is going to the bad. Or perhaps there are some young people—I have known very many cases of this kind—whose parents are living a godless life. Anxiety about those we love breaks up peace. And then lastly—I cannot go through more examples—there is the idea that GOD does not love you, because you do not *feel* that He loves you. I really believe more people are miserable in their religion from imagining that religion is based upon feeling, than almost anything else in the world. And therefore I cannot imagine a gift that we more want in a great congregation like this than that true peace, which is the fruit of the SPIRIT.

And when we turn to those who are living in the SPIRIT, what peace they have! Look, for instance, at JESUS CHRIST Himself. When one looks at Him as represented, say, in the beautiful play at Oberammergau, one of the most beautiful things about Him is the calm with which He goes through that terrible last scene. He seems to have an atmosphere of peace folded round His soul. People say the most bitter things to Him, but this beautiful atmosphere catches all the things that are

said and burns them out, as the atmosphere surrounding the earth catches the meteors that fall and turns them into thin dust. A glorious peace surrounds His soul. Or take someone, for instance, like Mother Cecile, who died a few days ago after a splendid work in South Africa. I was given a description of her last hours, and it was perfectly beautiful to hear of the peace and rest and happiness which shone around her before she went under the operation, which, as she half expected, proved fatal to her. A lovely peace comes upon those who have lived their lives in the SPIRIT and who are dying in the faith of JESUS CHRIST. One of my brother Bishops in the North a few days before he died, was talking to me about death as if he was going to walk into the next room. He was in perfect peace; because he had lived his life in the SPIRIT, he received the fruit of the SPIRIT, which is peace. Or, again, take these words, in which Wordsworth describes "The Happy Warrior":

> "Whose powers shed round him in the common strife,
> Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
> A constant influence, a peculiar grace;
> But who, if he be called upon to face
> Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
> Great issues, good or bad, for human kind,
> Is happy as a lover; and attired
> With sudden brightness, like a man inspired."

He is at peace when he is in the quiet concerns of ordinary life, and also at peace when face to face with a crisis in the history of humanity. And if you look round you at the people who are most influencing you in your life, and whom you look upon as the strongest and holiest people you know, is it not true that they

have about them a peace which passes understanding?

Now, what is that peace? I shall only have time to give an outline of what peace is.

First, undoubtedly, it is peace of conscience. I am bound to ask in this church, as I have asked in every church in the Mission, and implore any of my brothers and sisters who have anything upon their conscience to ask the HOLY SPIRIT to show them what that thing is, and to lay that thing aside. I have had since I stood here on Sunday an experience (and every little experience in life is useful) of what, from one side at any rate, death will be. When you receive before an operation whatever it is which makes you for a time insensible in order that the operation may take place, you seem to be carried for the moment out of the body; you are, in fact, in a way out of the body for a time; but your spirit, your mind, is perfectly active. I dare say that this has been the experience of many of you; you seem to be swept under the stars towards GOD; you seem to apprehend what Johannes Agricola meant when he said:

> "For I intend to get to GOD;
> It is to GOD I speed so fast;
> And on GOD's breast, my own abode,
> Those shoals of dazzling glory past,
> I'll lay my spirit down at last."*

When you are out of the body like that, or seem to be, if only for a few moments, you realise what death will be. Now, I can say this, and I am perfectly certain it is true, that when that moment comes there is only one thing that will matter, there is only one

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* Browning, "Johannes Agricola."

thing that will spoil the sensation that you are in the power of a great, loving, and protecting GOD, and that is unforsaken sin.

You and I one day will have really to pass out of the body, and will have really to meet GOD. And our mission is to prepare the soul for meeting GOD. I do pray that you will ask for and receive peace of conscience to-night, and go home at peace with GOD through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

Then, there must be peace of mind. I have quoted already that beautiful expression of Bacon: "Surely it is Heaven upon earth when a man's mind rests in Providence." Is your mind really resting in Providence? Do you believe in a loving, overruling, never-failing GOD? I know that there are things that seem to tell against it, such as the pain and suffering of the world; but I tell you this, that behind all there is an overruling Providence which turns evil to good, and that, if you trust and persevere, all things work together for good to them that love GOD. Then after peace of mind comes peace of heart—what is it that makes our Christian life restless? It is divided allegiance, it is trying to love two sets of things and two sets of people. It does not mean that we are not to love our fathers and mothers, our children and our friends, but that they must be loved in the LORD, as gifts from GOD, to be returned to Him, of which we have to give an account. But friendships which cannot be owned before GOD, loves which are not true loves, a heart that is half set upon being rich and half on loving GOD, a heart that is set on keeping the world and GOD in the same hand—that is divided allegiance which can never bring peace at all. Peace of heart is to love the LORD your GOD—and this covers the love of all He gives you —with all your heart.

And then comes peace of spirit! I love so much those words:

> "Not in entire forgetfulness,
> Nor yet in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home."

And I stand here to-day to plead with all those immortal spirits whom God has created, for whom He has not only a place hereafter reserved—kept for them—if they will have it, but a place in His heart now for them to come back to, "to God, who is their home," to enter into the peace of the Spirit which they can only have when they rest in God.

And then, lastly, I must answer the question: Why is all this the fruit of the Spirit? Because, in the first place, I believe the Holy Spirit alone can give a sense of the Fatherhood of God. He cries, "Abba, Father," in our hearts, making us realise that God is our Father. He alone can make us realise the Atonement, and therefore bring us peace of conscience. It is in the power of the Spirit that we look up to the Cross and say: "He loved me and gave Himself for me." St. Paul said that, and he received peace of conscience when he once believed that he was forgiven. It was the Holy Spirit that gave him the peace of God. How could I live my life, day after day, how could I take a Mission like this, if I did not believe that the Holy Spirit would give me each hour what I ought to say? Only from the Spirit can we hope to receive this peace.

If the Holy Spirit has begun a good work in us, He will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, and, unless we fling ourselves out of the lifeboat, we cannot be thrown out. If we keep ourselves under the

power and influence of the HOLY SPIRIT, He will never cease His work in us until He presents us faultless before the presence of GOD with exceeding joy. So give yourselves away to the SPIRIT to-night; put aside everything that is resisting the SPIRIT. Pray earnestly, "Come, HOLY GHOST, our souls inspire." Go home and think over in what way you can more fully receive the HOLY SPIRIT. Have you been confirmed? If not, why not? Surely we want the full power of the SPIRIT by every means by which we can receive it? Read again the eighth chapter and nineteenth verse of the Acts of the Apostles, and ask what it can possibly mean, unless there is a special falling of the HOLY SPIRIT in Confirmation. If you have been confirmed, stir up the gift of GOD within you by the laying on of hands—by coming back to your devout and regular Communions. And so, living in the SPIRIT, we shall have, GOD grant, the fruit of the SPIRIT, and the fruit of the SPIRIT is peace. On Sunday we said

> "Return, O holy Dove, return,
> Sweet Messenger of rest;
> I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
> And drove Thee from my breast."

May the Holy Dove descend upon every heart to-night, and may we have the peace of GOD which passeth all understanding!

KENTISH TOWN

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

MEN ONLY

X

DRINK AND GAMBLING*

"Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the SPIRIT."—EPH. v. 18.

WE are trying, my brothers, to break chains as the Mission passes through North London. On Sunday afternoons we take the things which hold men back from yielding to the SPIRIT—ways of resisting the HOLY SPIRIT. We took "Lust" at Highgate*—that lust which is the parody of true love, that lust which damns souls in London in hundreds and in thousands; and if I pass that over, my brothers, in Kentish Town this afternoon, it is not because I believe—would GOD I could!—that there is no false love and uncontrolled passion which is damning souls here. I would only ask you in passing, before we go on to our subject for this afternoon, Have you got in your lives any dishonouring friendship or secret lust which is leading you into sin? If so, can the

* See Sermons II. and III., pp. 12, 31.

HOLY SPIRIT lead you into all truth? You are resisting the HOLY SPIRIT; you never can be won, never, while that dishonouring lust is choking out your life. Last Sunday we took "Indifference" at St. Pancras.* "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty." And in the Last Day we shall see how that very indifference that we pass over so lightly looks in the eyes of GOD.

And now this afternoon I want to say something about drink and gambling. I know the sort of man that comes out to a Mission service in the afternoon; and if I say plain words about these things, it is not because I think there are many here who are under the chains of drink and gambling, but because I come as a captain to my men in London, in the name of my Master, to rally you together for a common onset upon these two evils, which are choking out the life of thousands of our brothers. "He that is not with Me is against Me, and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth." Those are the words of our Heavenly Captain; and, therefore, let us look first of all at drink. I think that we are getting too much accustomed to what is going on in our country. I think we are too much accustomed, for instance, to sit down under the fact of the two hundred millions a year that is spent in drink. It is something appalling when you think of it, and especially when you consider all the uses that we have for our money, the great need there is for better housing, for something like garden suburbs, and other things on which we are setting our hearts in London! And then if we go to our hospitals!

* See Sermon VIII., p. 83.

Every Monday for nine years did I spend in one of our great hospitals; and what I saw then convinced me of the truth of what the doctors tell us with one voice—that whole wards of our hospitals might be shut up—I heard a doctor say so myself—if only the drink curse could be cured in the district. I used to go up to one of the patients, and say: "My friend, what brought you here?" And the answer would be: "I slipped on the curb, Mr. Ingram, on Saturday night." I did not need to ask him any other question. And, therefore, when we think of wards in our hospitals filled through over-indulgence in drink in London, it seems to me we have sat down too long under it—that we are too much accustomed to it. Or if we take our police courts and ask the magistrates, they tell us that half the crime of London, and of the whole country, I believe, is due to drink. Long lines, I am told, stand in our police courts on any morning, of women no less than men, and the charge over and over again is "drunk and disorderly." It is only those who have seen them who have any adequate idea of what drink is doing in our midst in the degradation of character. And do you not notice how often it is the pleasantest and nicest man who takes to drink, the man who is most sociable, who would make such a worker for the kingdom of God if only his talents, powers, and social influence had been consecrated? I may be speaking to some in this very church who can remember perfectly well how they were tempted when they were young men—how someone induced them to come round, first one night, then another; how they started married life, and meant to be such good husbands, and make their homes comfortable; then after a time they have not come home, and the poor little wife has had her heart broken, and the little home that

began so well is broken up, the children are neglected, and what might have been a little heaven is turned to a hell, all because the man has taken to drink.

And then from drink I turn to gambling. How well I remember one night—I had just come home from a long day in Bethnal Green, and found a young fellow about eighteen with his face quite pale with terror in my room. I had known him as a very good boy who had been in one of our clubs. To my utter astonishment, the moment I came into the room he dropped on to his knees, held up his hands, and begged me for mercy. "Well, what is the matter, my lad?" I asked. He had always been a cheerful, manly boy. "Oh, sir," he said, "I will tell you what has happened. I dropped out of the club, you remember, and they got me to come round to the public-house, and there I began to put money on horses. I had never seen the horses, but they told me it was an easy way of making a shilling or two." What happened? "I put on," he said, "nine pounds which belonged to my shopmates—I am the treasurer of the shop club—and I have got to meet them to-morrow morning." He said: "Can you help me, Mr. Ingram, and save me? It is my last chance." Of course, I lent him the money, and gave him the chance again. His people were respectable people. But that is happening, my brothers, to hundreds of our lads in London to-day. It *may* have happened to some of you; I am not saying it *has* happened to some of you, but it has happened to hundreds of our boys; and while the Church is doing its best by clubs and institutes to get them into honest ways, and to make them enjoy good games and manly recreation, there is that cursed book-maker's clerk at the corner of the public-houses—I have seen such

with my own eyes—tempting the boys to bet and taking their money. I ran one in one morning with twenty pounds on him in sixpences and shillings, taken from boys and girls ; and I saw a foolish man, who ought to have known better, go up to him that very morning and give him five shillings out of his hard-won earnings that ought to have been given to his wife, all cast away in this miserable gambling craze. It is not a desire to read the latest politics, is it, that makes that rush for the evening papers every day ? It is not a thirsting desire to know the last speech in the House of Commons, but the last tips on the races—that is why you will see people rush down the streets after the evening papers in parts of London every day. That is why whole wards in our gaols, as a governor told me himself, are simply full of young fellows, who are in gaol because they have taken money to supply what they have lost in their betting and gambling from the shop-till, or from their employers in some other way.

Therefore let us look at those twin evils to-day, which, if they are not ruining any of you here, may ruin your boys any day, and any of the young fellows who may be working in the same place, or on the same railway as you. And the first thing I notice about them is that they are twin evils. Every boy, I think, that I have known go to the bad or gamble has also taken to drink ; betting and gambling have always been connected with public-houses in some way or other in every case.

And the second thing I notice is that they forge a chain which binds the soul with most terrible strength. There is an old story I often used to tell in Missions—in fact, I remember telling this story at the very time when the man of whom I shall speak to you was present ; and the story is this : The devil gave a soul

once the task of making a chain. The soul went on making this chain—a horrible chain of habit—year in year out, month after month ; and when he brought it there was always the same reply : "Take it away and make it longer—take it away and make it longer!" After receiving that answer six or seven times the chain was brought, supposed to be finished at last, and then he got his reward : "Take him and bind him hand and foot—bind him with his own chain, and cast him into outer darkness." I remember that a man—a respectable man, well dressed—sent for me after that Mission service, and as I went into his dining-room he looked at me and said : "You had your eye on me all the time. This is my chain, and you knew it ;" and he put his hand on a decanter full of brandy on the table. He said : "You were speaking to me I know, but thus I break my chain !" He dashed it down, bottle, brandy and all on the floor. Now, it is possible —and quite as possible for the most respectable-looking man here as for the poorest—that a secret chain, either of drink or gambling, or both, has been gradually woven round some soul here for years. This is the afternoon on which that chain is going to be broken ; or, if not, this is the afternoon on which GOD in Heaven has stretched out a hand which will enable that chain to be broken ; if not broken to-day, probably it never will be. "Take it away and make it a little longer !" is what the devil tries to persuade you to do, and then at last comes the inevitable sentence : "Take him away, and with his own chain bind him hand and foot !" Speaking to you from GOD, as His minister, and speaking to you as your brother-man, with temptations and trials and difficulties of my own, I implore you to break that chain this afternoon. It is not too long, it is not too heavy, it is not too strong to-day :

this time twelve months it may be impossible to break it.

But perhaps you argue with me. I always used to like to have at the end of a sermon or lecture—we have not time this afternoon—friends getting up to state their case ; I liked them to get up and to state what they had to say against what I had laid down. Let me picture one or two of you arguing with me. I can imagine one saying, "After all, I am nobody's enemy but my own!" How often we hear that said about a man who is thought to be "nobody's enemy but his own!" Well, it is pretty bad to be your own enemy, because you are not your own, as I shall remind those who come to-night in the passage from which I shall preach this evening : "We are not our own, we are bought with a price." What right have you to think of yourself as your own? There you sit in this church this afternoon ; you neither made yourself nor redeemed yourself : everything that you have is given you by God. If you are not bearing fruit for God you are in the way : "Cut it down ; why cumbereth it the ground?" is the sentence passed on you. The man who in a place like Kentish Town at the end of a year or two has no fruit to show for God, is simply in the way. God made you, gave you all the powers you have, loved you with an everlasting love, redeemed you by His Son, sends down His Holy Spirit to sanctify you, and has a place reserved for you in Heaven ; and yet you say, "I am nobody's enemy but my own." And what about the mother or the sister, if you are unmarried—what sort of a home have you made for them? What about the wife or children? What about the boys growing up, when they see you go round—if there be any such in church to-day—once or twice to the public-house on

Sunday, and only once in a way come to church? The boys will do, when they grow up, what they see their father *do;* that is the experience of the whole world; they pay no attention whatever to what they hear him say unless it is backed up by deeds. And therefore it is not true that you are nobody's enemy but yourself. If that is the life you are living, you are the worst enemy your children could possibly have; you are an enemy to your own people.

Or perhaps you will argue with me about gambling, and say: "Prove what you say from the Bible; show me chapter and verse where it is said that gambling is wrong." I take it that gambling and the result of gambling are shown to be bad by their results upon human life and character. When I see a man who gambles habitually becoming a shifty character, habitually becoming restless, habitually and gradually becoming more and more unfit for good, honest, steady work, more and more unreliable at his post, over and over again taking to dishonesty to pay his gambling debts, then I can see the hand of the devil in it without any more argument at all. But a man might say, "What harm is there in putting threepence or sixpence on this or that?" I say it is the small things which are the beginning of great mischiefs. The result of a little dose of poison, if it be very infinitesimal, may not be great, but wise people do not tamper with poison at all; and when you want to see what the poison is on a large scale, search the gaols and prisons of England, and you have your answer.

Or another may say: "Well, is it not rather hard? You well-to-do people"—this was actually said by a poor woman in East London the other day—"can go for a change to the seaside if you want it. My only way of getting out of Bethnal Green is by buying four penn'orth of gin. Then I am out of it, then I

am away from my troubles." And God forbid that we should not acknowledge an amount of justice in that reply! God forbid that we who have comfortable homes and good meals every day should cast a stone of scorn at these poor half-starved fellow-creatures of ours, who, with houses you can hardly call homes, cold and wretched, get away from their troubles by four pennyworth of gin! But my reply to them is just this. My brother, my sister, there will come a fearful reaction. The drink may for a moment carry you away from your troubles, but with an awful sinking the craving comes back. Nothing is more instructive than the change in the attitude of the doctors on the whole temperance question. I can remember that five-and-twenty years ago some of the best doctors thought alcohol was a sustaining thing, and almost laughed at the pioneers who held the view, now almost universally accepted, that, while alcohol is a whip to the tired nerves for the moment, it does not strengthen at all. But now, such is the reaction, that you will find the use of alcohol in our hospitals has gone down three-fourths, according to the latest statistics for London. And therefore, if I am arguing with you, I am only arguing with you in love. I only come to plead with you because I love to see you free men; and what I ask you to do now is what that brother did of whom I spoke. Break the chain, free yourselves from the cursed temptation, whether of drink or gambling; resolve this afternoon that you will not lay another bet, give up going round to that place where they play for money, and, if you cannot be what so many of us have been for so many years, a teetotaller, at least be a sober, self-restrained, and self-controlled man till you die. But if you have ever let it get the better of you, you are not safe until you give it up altogether—break your chain. O Holy Spirit, break the chain of

any one of my brothers who is bound by either of these chains this afternoon.

But even that is not enough. You remember the story of the man out of whom the evil spirit had departed. The house was left empty. The devil had departed, but no new power was admitted to the heart, no new work was given to the hands, and, there being nothing to fill that empty house, there entered a sevenfold devilish power afterwards. And therefore remember my text: "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the SPIRIT." "Be filled with the SPIRIT." Our Mission in North London is a special Mission of the SPIRIT. We consider on Sundays the work of the SPIRIT; we shall take the fruit of the SPIRIT on the week-days; and we are picturing to ourselves a real and most awfully solemn truth, that the HOLY SPIRIT Himself is baptizing, confirming, reviving, and filling with spiritual life. And therefore my message to you, my central message, is "Be filled with the SPIRIT." What does GOD expect you to be? I know none of you. I do not know what you are individually at all, but I do know this: when GOD sent you for this short probation time—it is not very long—to earth, He meant you to be a spiritual man; He meant you—so we Church-people fully believe, founding our belief on Scripture—to be baptized as a child, and brought into the Divine society which we call the Church. He meant you to begin praying, to be taught quite definitely, first by your mother, then by believing teachers, to pray to Him from your earliest years. Perhaps some of you began your prayers at your mother's knee. In answer you were to receive the HOLY SPIRIT to help you with your childish trials and your boyish difficulties. "How much more," it was promised, "shall He give the HOLY SPIRIT to them

that ask Him?" Then when you came to years of discretion you were to be confirmed, Confirmation being the complement of Baptism. In the early days you will find sometimes that people were confirmed directly after Baptism. I have before now baptized six adults at the font and had them confirmed the same day, according to primitive custom. But if you were baptized as infants, you were meant to be confirmed when you arrived at years of discretion: "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the HOLY GHOST, for as yet He was fallen on none of them." You were meant from the day of your Confirmation—filled with the SPIRIT, and with the SPIRIT having fallen upon you—to have looked round to see what work you could do for GOD. You were to be an earnest spiritual man, leading the family in prayer, gathering the children round you before they went to bed, setting them an example of a religious, spiritual man, working among your fellows, who were to feel that you believed in GOD, that you were GOD's man. You were to be an example of one whose temper was controlled by the SPIRIT, whose inner thoughts were guided by the SPIRIT, who never used bad language, who was always ready to help his fellows in distress, pure in thought, word, and deed. You were to have been a Church-worker, working up for services like this, knocking at the doors, and, when you could, at the hearts, of your fellow-men and bringing them to the church you had learnt to love. That is what you were meant to be when you were created a man, filled with the SPIRIT; and I ask you, is that the man you are? That is the man you will be expected to have been when you meet GOD.

I can never forget a story that made the deepest impression upon me when I was a young man. A young man was dying, and his family and friends were

round him, and they thought he could not hear what they said. They were saying what a sad thing it was that he should die like this. "He was the best man at a bargain in the City, and had everything to live for," they said to one another. He heard what they said, and he raised himself in the bed and spoke to them: "I heard what you have been saying, but if you could change places with me, and knew that not all the gold in the world could buy back five minutes of life, and that in five minutes you had to meet your GOD, you would speak differently. I have to meet my GOD empty-handed, with nothing to show for my life!" I would ask you to picture yourself on your death-bed—it may not be a very long time before you are there: somebody dies in London every eight minutes day and night—what is going to give you comfort then? To have been the best at a bargain in the City, to have been even the best workman on the railway? Certainly that will bring you very little comfort then; still less to have been a boon companion, or the wittiest, cleverest person in the club. But to have started, as I hope you men will start after this service, a branch of the Church of England Men's Society, to be a nucleus for men's work in the parish, with the officials of the Church leading the way, with a simple rule of prayer and service—to have come out after a time like this, and been confirmed in your own parish church; to have been steadfast and earnest and devout communicants; to have looked after the boys where you work and made the place easier for them, and especially to have kept drink and gambling away from them; to have made the world better for the children of to-morrow than it is to-day; to have prayed a little and read the Bible every day; to have tried to live out your life as in the sight of GOD—that shall bring a man peace at the last.

KENTISH TOWN

SUNDAY EVENING

XI

THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY GHOST

"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?"—1 Cor. iii. 16.

"Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price."—1 Cor. vi. 19.

WE come to-night to a message so awful that I prayed over and over again before I dared to come and deliver it; and even now it is so awful a truth that I hope that in your own hearts you are offering a prayer that nothing may be said unworthy of it, and that you yourselves, as you hear it and realise it more, may not stand condemned at the Last Day for the forgetfulness of it. The awful truth is this: that not only does the Holy Ghost come to convict of sin, not only does He come to lead us into the path of righteousness, but He dwells in us. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" And, therefore, if this

is true, the HOLY GHOST within me speaks to-night to the HOLY GHOST within you, and both of us will have to render an account for this evening's work before the judgment-seat of GOD.

Let us consider how we arrive at this truth. In one sense the earth itself is the temple of the HOLY GHOST. Half our difficulties in faith arise from forgetting that the earth itself is an expression of the HOLY SPIRIT. This world is not a dead, pagan, unholy thing. I copied down to-day some inspiring words about the earth which that wonderful poet, Browning, puts into the mouth of a little maiden as she passes in the early morning :

> "The year's at the spring,
> Day's at the morn,
> Morning's at seven,
> The hillside's dew-pearled,
> The lark's on the wing,
> The snail's on the thorn,
> God's in His heaven,
> All's right with the world!"*

That maiden's spring song is full of a glorious truth. Our earth, our world, is an expression of the mind of the SPIRIT. What a beautiful mind GOD has! Look out, as the little maiden did, on some spring morning. It is one thing to say, "Nature is a wonderful thing"; it is quite another thing to say, "What a holy, what a wonderful mind the HOLY SPIRIT has!" That sunshine is an expression of His being ; He lingered over that glorious lily ; these roses He thought of ; He planned that spirit of order which rules the world. And it is not only that the idea of the earth being the temple of the LORD is an inspiring thought, but it is a helpful one

* Browning, "Pippa Passes."

as well in many of our difficulties. Have you never felt any difficulty about the Incarnation? Have you never thought that it was almost too good to believe that the SON of GOD came down and took human flesh? Does the promise seem almost too great to be true? "The HOLY GHOST shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the SON of GOD." But what if it was GOD's world to start with? What if this human flesh is a holy thing in itself? There should be no such complete gulf as we make between things "religious" and things "secular" when we understand the world; it is GOD's world, and GOD's in His heaven, GOD's in the earth, "All's right with the world." And therefore that thought helps me to believe the Incarnation. CHRIST came unto His own, His own world; and so when the HOLY SPIRIT came, He came down upon the earth which He had made. It is most striking—and I like to try and help the thinking men who may be among us to-night, and who study these things—to notice how the philosophers and thinkers of the world are coming round to this truth to-day. I can remember when the fashionable philosophy of the day was what was called Materialism. Materialism is out of date to-day. Even though they have not reached our full truth that the HOLY SPIRIT is the centre of everything, you find advanced thinkers—I could mention some of their names—who begin to tell us that spirit is the only reality, that matter is a form of spirit, and that the spiritual world is the only real world. How the children of GOD come to their own if they only wait! It is what we said years ago. Are we surprised that the body of JESUS CHRIST was raised from the dead? But what if the flesh itself, what if the body

itself, was a spiritual thing through the power of the Spirit of God?

And then, secondly, we get nearer to the grand and yet awful truth of to-night when we remember that the Church is the body which the Holy Spirit fills. Ye are the temple of God, the whole of you. Do you remember how the infant Church waited as silently as you wait to-night? Timid, irresolute, cold, they waited; then, with tongues of fire and a sudden rushing, mighty wind, down came the Holy Ghost on that waiting Church; and He has never gone back. And while we are accustomed to the thought that the Church exists for you and me, have you ever thought that you and I exist for the Church, that the Holy Spirit's office is to prepare the Bride for Christ? There was a poor girl lying on her back whom I used to visit every week in my first curacy; and it used to puzzle her, and to puzzle those who watched her, why she was allowed to lie like that for, I think, fifteen years (I was only there for a year or two, but she lay there years before I went and years after I left). She had to lie on from year to year, month after month, in pretty constant pain. Well, I found a reading which comforted her more than anything in Bishop Walsham How's book "Pastor in Parochia." It was about the stonemason's workshop—how the stonemason takes his chisel and hammers away at the stone day after day with very little apparent result at first; but he is getting it ready for a place in his building, and the more time he spends on the stone the more beautiful a place it is going to have. That taught her—she would often make me read it on my visit—that she existed for the Church, the spiritual Temple; her years of suffering and patience were not waste of time. She loved to think that the Master-Builder was chiselling

here, and working away there, and fretting here, to make her more fit for a beautiful place in His Temple. I may be speaking to some who are going through a sad time of suffering, of long sickness, who have been laid aside for months, even years: do not imagine that you are taking no part in the work of the Church. Bear patiently those sufferings, lie quietly under the Master-Builder's hand. You exist for the Church, and you have a place when you are chiselled and carved and ready—you have a place in your niche in the spiritual Temple in heaven. Never fear; no man can pluck you out of your Father's hand, and the HOLY SPIRIT is at work upon you for the spiritual Temple which shall last for ever.

And that brings us, thirdly, to the full truth of which I spoke: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of GOD, and that the SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you?" Do you see what it means? Do you realise that there, behind what I can see of you, behind the outer court of the Temple, behind even the Holy Place, in the Holy of Holies of your being, the HOLY GHOST lives, except ye be reprobate? Have you never felt some still small voice speaking within you? Sometimes, when you have been careless, and have given up your prayers and your Church-going, have you not heard a voice saying that it was not right, reminding you of the time when you learned to pray by your mother's knee, reminding you how you felt when you were a boy or girl long ago? That was the HOLY SPIRIT's voice pleading with you, moving your conscience. Were you brought here to-night by some influence which you hardly realise? Do you wonder why it was that your sister said to you, "Will you come round to Church with me?" You do not generally come, but you came to-night. It was the HOLY GHOST

within you who responded to the influence which through her was exerted upon you. You know that "the flesh lusteth against the SPIRIT"; but have we all realised that the SPIRIT lusteth against the flesh, that we cannot be quite happy if we are thoroughly bad, that there is an impulse unkilled yet within us that cries aloud for GOD, that draws us towards better things, that stirs us up, that prevents us being really happy in our sin? Oh, for GOD's sake do not choke it down! that is the Holy Dove of GOD struggling, pleading still, within you. I was asked two or three times in the last week what was meant by "sin against the HOLY GHOST," which could not be forgiven. Had the questioner sinned that sin? If you ask me that to-night, I answer "No." I cannot believe for a single moment that you would be in this church to-night if you had finally said, "Evil, be thou my good"; and that is what sin against the HOLY GHOST really means.

We are met to-night to ask, What effect, if this is so, ought the HOLY GHOST to have over spirit, over mind, and over body, as He dwells in the Holy of Holies, behind body, behind mind, and behind spirit? What effect upon the body? The body is a holy thing. There is nothing wrong with the body. JESUS CHRIST wore the body without a touch of sin. Do not lay the blame, my brother, for your sin on your body. The passions and instincts of the body are planted in it by GOD. The body is a holy thing. But there is all the difference between a man on a horse with the reins in his hands and the bit in his horse's mouth and the same man with the reins round his feet being dragged in the dust. And that is the difference between the man whose body is controlled by the SPIRIT and the man who has let the reins gather round his feet, and who is

dragged in the dust by his passions. The body, like the horse, is a splendid servant, but a terrible master. Am I speaking to someone who, perhaps, unknown to their dearest friend, is letting the body rule the spirit? I say, let that spirit within you assume the reins and hold again command of the body; go down upon your knees and beg the HOLY SPIRIT to forgive you for grieving, disobeying, rebelling against the SPIRIT. That body will be a splendid servant if the spirit holds the reins, but otherwise it will be a terrible master.

What effect will it have upon the mind if the SPIRIT dwells within it? You cannot indulge those bad and wicked thoughts, you cannot harbour that jealousy which you brought to Church with you, you cannot go back and carry on that bitter quarrel if the HOLY SPIRIT is going to rule your life. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of GOD?" The HOLY SPIRIT dwells in you—

> "And every virtue we possess,
> And every conquest won,
> And every thought of holiness,
> Are His alone."

Yield to those better, gentler feelings. "Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report,"—let your mind dwell on those. That is what the SPIRIT is putting into my mind, not the wicked, jealous, angry, bitter thoughts.

What effect will it have upon the spirit? Oh, how earnest will be our prayers if, in the Holy of Holies, our spirit dwells with the SPIRIT of GOD! No forgetfulness of prayer, no cold, half-hearted petitions, if the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD dwells in the Holy of Holies with my spirit. Then I shall pray for others, then my prayers will be earnest, then I shall say, "Come,

HOLY GHOST, my soul inspire ; pray in me, give me the words, the thoughts to pray." That will be the effect of the HOLY SPIRIT's dwelling within me.

And if it is a great responsibility, what a glorious hope it is ! As I look round me, what possibilities do I picture for you ? Men, women, boys and girls filled with the SPIRIT, becoming such powers for good in Kentish Town, so loving at home, so pure in thought and word and deed, so burning with missionary zeal, such bright witnesses where you work, if only you are filled with the SPIRIT. If we let the SPIRIT have His way with us, He will give us each hour what we ought to say ; He will cry "Abba, FATHER," in our hearts ; He will take of CHRIST and show Him to us—He will pick us up, as it were, and use us for the kingdom of GOD. The SPIRIT of the LORD caught away Philip. Do you remember that ? The SPIRIT of the LORD caught away Philip, and when I see some young man, caught away from some comfortable life at home, go out and work for the LORD in South Africa or China, I know that the SPIRIT of the LORD has caught him away, and "he is found at Azotus."

And so I ask you to go home after we have knelt together, and in the solemn silence ask yourself, "Do I believe that the HOLY GHOST dwells in me ? Have I driven Him away ? He will come back, He will come back for certain, He will come back. He has not gone. He is like the dove, of whom we spoke in St. Pancras Church,* among the trees in the little village. He was silent, but was not gone, and His voice came back again when the wickedness was put away from the village. Let us all pray, "Return, O Holy Dove, return in full power ; come

* See p. 75.

and work in me, come and conquer my temper ; come and drive out every evil thing, come and fill me with Thy power ; come and use me for the kingdom of GOD." And you will be astonished at the answer to your prayer : the HOLY GHOST will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you. And, if you live in the SPIRIT—it is not enough to yield to His influence for three days—but if you live in that SPIRIT and stir up into flame the gift of GOD which is in you, you will grow in power and love ; the HOLY GHOST will purify you and perfect you, and use you until He presents you at last before the presence of GOD with exceeding joy.

KENTISH TOWN

WEDNESDAY EVENING

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. I have had many questions asked me concerning life after death, and especially about five minutes after death.

We are just the same five minutes after death as before. There is no change in the actual dying. I am certain that there are some who are under the impression that when death comes to them it will change them from sinners into saints. Death does not make the slightest difference ; and here I will say that when I said that Mr. Chambers, who wrote a book called "Our Life After Death," leaves out the strong sayings of JESUS CHRIST Himself, I did not mean to say that he did not consider them, because he considered them very carefully, but I meant that in my opinion he did not lay sufficient stress upon them, although there is much in the book that I heartily agree with, and it is well worth reading.

2. I have sent me by some working men requests to answer an article of Robert Blatchford's on "The Case of the Bottom Dog," in which he says : "It is unjust to punish a man for what he did not commit. Man did not make himself, therefore it is unjust for GOD to punish man."

The answer is this : Man has a free will, and no man is punished for what he does not do. We are free to do

it or not to do a thing, therefore it is just that we shall be rewarded or punished according to what we do or do not do.

3. I have brought before me these verses to explain from Heb. vi. 4-6: "For as touching those who were once enlightened and tasted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the HOLY GHOST, and tasted the good word of GOD, and the powers of the world to come, and then fell away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance." Many had been led to despair by misunderstanding these verses.

The difficulty may be overcome by the correct translation in the Greek, which gives the reading, "while they are falling away"—that is, whilst they are saying "Evil, be thou my good," there can be no turning people. Do not let the devil use this passage to hinder your soul from repentance; think of the many promises on the other side, and the pleadings of CHRIST with the soul.

4. "What was it St. Paul meant when he said, 'For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate' (Rom. viii. 29), and 'Elect according to the foreknowledge of GOD the FATHER' (1 St. Pet. i. 2)? If we are fore-ordained to eternal damnation, what is the good of the Mission?"

There is nothing said about being fore-ordained to condemnation. The body of people referred to is the Catholic Church, which has been called to a state of privilege. The Church of CHRIST and the Jewish Church are part of GOD's plan; "to foreknow," in the sense in which it is used here, means to mark out for a Divine purpose. I advise you to read a useful book on "The Epistle to the Romans" by the present Bishop of Birmingham.

5. "Will the devil bring up the sins of my past life?"

No, not if they are confessed and forgiven. We should remember our sins with contrition, but GOD, after forgiving them, blots them out.

6. "Are the sins of the fathers visited on the children?"

Yes; a visit to any children's hospital will show how the sins of the parents are often visited on the children. God has made us all to be one human family, and we are saved by one Elder Brother; and if this is so, we must not be surprised that the sin of one member of the family affects another.

7. "What is meant by being "baptized for the dead"?

This is one of the most difficult and puzzling passages in the Scriptures. Bishop Christopher Wordsworth explains that it could not mean people were baptized as proxies for the dead. St. Paul would never have sanctioned such a superstitious practice as that. He says that it means that at every Baptism we make a solemn asseveration of our belief in the resurrection of the dead.

8. "I believe in two states, the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant," somebody writes, "and now I am told there is a third state, the Church at Rest."

At the Reformation the proper teaching about Paradise was not brought forward sufficiently. Our Lord said, "To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise," and it is right to believe in the third state, the Church at Rest.

9. I am asked to explain the difference between "in my flesh shall I see God" and "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God."

This is an instance of the usefulness of reading the Revised Version, wherein is the correct rendering of the former text, "*out of* my flesh."

10. "Is evolution contrary to Christianity?" writes another.

Certainly not. However slowly the body may have been evolved from the lower animals, it could not in the least alter the revelation in Genesis, that God breathed into man and gave him a living soul. This gift marks us off from the animals. A belief in evolution does not contradict the belief that we have received Divine attributes from God Himself.

KENTISH TOWN

WEDNESDAY EVENING*

XII

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: LONG-SUFFERING

"The fruit of the SPIRIT is long-suffering."—GAL. v. 22.

THE Mission is passing on through North London, leaving its message in the different churches and parishes—Love at Highgate,† Joy at Islington,‡ Peace at St. Pancras ;§ and now we pray that this special message—the gift of long-suffering—may be left in Kentish Town for ever.

The ancients had a respect for endurance. The tale of the Spartan boy and the fox was one of their earliest stories. We read how the Stoic wrapped his robe about him and died in silence. There was a certain amount of admiration for the quality of

* Owing to the time taken in answering questions (see p. 132), the address was shorter than usual.

† See p. 31. ‡ See p. 52. § See p. 104.

endurance in pre-Christian days, but it was our LORD Himself who lifted it to a foremost position in the Christian character.

Those who have seen the Passion Play at Oberammergau must all have been struck by the wonderful calmness of that central figure, hurried from one scene to another ; it seems all the time as if his soul is wrapped in an atmosphere of patience. "Behold, we count them happy which endure." Long-suffering, endurance, is one of the essential points of the Christian character which must be worked out in us. I have been visiting only to-day a lady who has been prayed for among the intercessions, and who is following the message of the Mission in the papers. What is there for her except endurance ? Marvellous is the patience she shows ! Hers is one of the cases from which one comes away with a better lesson than ever one went to teach. There are many of you, no doubt, who have to endure something. Perhaps it is the temper of others, or the struggle with that temptation which never seems to leave you. I remember Archbishop Temple once saying in an address to men : "The worst of it is that the struggle is so fearfully long." It is endurance, long-suffering, that you want to keep you steadfast through all the monotony of life.

Be perfectly clear in your minds that the thought which sometimes comes to you — the thought that because you have to endure all this GOD has forsaken you—is itself a temptation. That question is answered back once for all from the Cross of Calvary. What did CHRIST have to endure ? And GOD had not forsaken Him, though through the darkness rang out that agonised utterance : "My GOD, My GOD, why hast Thou forsaken Me ?" As Mrs. Browning has said so beautifully :

"Deserted? God could separate from His own essence rather,
And Adam's sins have swept between the righteous Son and Father;
Yea, once, Immanuel's orphaned cry His universe hath shaken.
It went up single, echoless: 'My God, I am forsaken!'
It went up from the Holy's lips amid His lost creation,
That of the lost, no son should breathe those words of desolation."

Nobody is forsaken. Banish from your minds the thought that because you have such a bad time, such a hard struggle, such a ceaseless fight, God does not love you. The struggle itself is a sign that you are dear to Christ. God wants to make you spiritually like those heroes at Waterloo who had to stand still and bear.

God is so patient. It is only man who is impatient. "God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient; and God is provoked every day."

People get up and say that there is no God, or that He is a bad God; and God says nothing. He goes on giving them the very breath with which they blaspheme His Name. But God will not be patient for ever. We do not know that He will go on giving us chance after chance.

We have thought about the patience of our Lord Jesus Christ, but what about the Holy Spirit's patience? Think what He knows about each one of you—the things He has seen you do. The gift of long-suffering is the special gift of God the Holy Ghost. He it is who says "Abba, Father," in our hearts, who takes the things of Christ and shows them to us. We want these things to be a living reality in our lives. Just think, then, that the Holy Spirit who lives with us, who lives *in* us, will actually take the long-suffering

and patience of JESUS CHRIST and impart it to us. Let us pray with all our hearts that He will so do His blessed work among us that those of us who have come here with bad tempers, or borne down by home troubles and anxieties, may go back home again with the gift of long-suffering.

HAMPSTEAD

SUNDAY MORNING

XIII

THE HOLY GHOST THE SOURCE OF POWER

"Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses."—Acts i. 8.

I HAVE reserved for Hampstead, after prayer as to what the special message shall be, what I believe to be one of the most needed messages about the work of God the Holy Ghost, and that is that He alone is the source of power. "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses." I want you to face with me, first, why we believe this power to be a real thing; secondly, whether we want it — and I will explain to you in a moment what I mean by that apparently strange question—and then how we are to receive it.

First, why do I believe that this power is a real thing, a real gift? I cannot see the wind, but I see the trees bend before the wind; I can see the corn-stalks bow down as the wind passes over them; I can see the sails of ships full of the wind as they go across

the ocean, and therefore I believe in the power of the wind. Why do I believe in the power of the HOLY GHOST? First, because it is clearly promised me by GOD. I am speaking, of course, to believers in GOD. I do not stand here to prove to you that there is a GOD. GOD, who never fails His people, has promised power. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My SPIRIT, saith the Lord of Hosts." That is the motto of our Mission. When JESUS CHRIST went away, He said: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you." What was the Comforter to do when He came? "Tarry ye in Jerusalem till ye be clothed with power from on high. When the HOLY GHOST is come upon you, ye shall receive power." I ask you, Could the Word of GOD be more clearly pledged to anything than this—that the HOLY GHOST shall give us power? I look to see whether this promise was fulfilled to the first disciples, and I see a body of men—not only Apostles, but all the first disciples, men and women just like ourselves—tarrying in Jerusalem, gathered together, weak, irresolute, timid, and perplexed. I hear the sound of a rushing mighty wind; I see tongues of fire coming down upon that body. What has happened? They have received the SPIRIT of power. Those timid, irresolute fishermen and peasants are turned into the world's apostles. They always know henceforth the next thing to do: they face the world with courage and determination. Unknown, unnamed, they go out, a little body, full of the HOLY GHOST, and they convert the world. We gathered here to-day in this church have been converted to CHRIST by the power of the HOLY GHOST, through the work of that little body of a hundred and fifty people. It seems to me

that the most sceptical person in the world, as he sees the effect of the SPIRIT of power upon that small, insignificant body of men and women, must believe in the power of the HOLY GHOST. I come nearer. I ask myself, I ask my brother priests, if, when they have over and over again been tired and weary, and perhaps been feeling cold and dead, they have not invoked the help of the HOLY GHOST? And I ask them whether, with a certainty that it is impossible to impart to anybody else, we have not known in the deepest, inmost region of our soul that the HOLY GHOST *has* helped us; that He *has* given us in that hour what we ought to say; that He *has* spoken through us to some man whom we thought, and the world thought, absolutely hardened in sin; that He *has* opened the way in personal pastoral visiting, which could have been opened by no human power whatever.

The great hypothesis on which we started our ministry has by ten thousand proofs been confirmed. I believe in the HOLY GHOST, first, on authority; I believe in Him afterwards from experience. Nay, I will come nearer. I will ask *you* if you have not found out that there is this spiritual power in the HOLY GHOST. When you, my brother, perplexed almost to death in your business, prayed for guidance, did you receive it or did you not receive it? When you, my lad, struggling with that dreadful temptation you never told another soul about, prayed to the HOLY GHOST, did there come down a strange, mysterious power, clearly not your own, which quieted you and strengthened you, or did there not? That was the power of the HOLY GHOST. You, my sister, tempted almost to madness by jealousy or bitter feeling of wrong, did you pray in that hour for spiritual help? Do not stand up and tell me that no spiritual help came.

You found power; and therefore this is our first truth to-day, compared to which all else is nothing. This is what we are promised from heaven. This power of the HOLY GHOST is a real thing, as real as the wind, though we cannot see it—a real spiritual gift.

And that brings me, in the second place, to ask the question which I would rather not have to ask this morning: Do you want it? And it all depends upon the answer to another question: What is the object of your life? What are you aiming at in life? To what end were you born? For what cause came you into the world? Upon what, now, as you sit there on this Sunday morning, are you bending your whole mind? It is extraordinary how people generally get that at which they aim with all their minds and souls. If a man has set his heart on being rich and prosperous, and has spent time and energy on that one thing, he probably is prosperous and is rich. If people are bent on social influence, and make their aim and object to be social lights, they may not be loved—such people generally are not loved, because you cannot command love—but they are pretty certain to be fairly influential people among their neighbours. And therefore the first point, on which everything in our Mission depends to-day, is: "What am I aiming at? What is the subject which most recurs to my thoughts when I am by myself? What is the central, overpowering aim of my life?" And I stand here to tell you from the Bible what it ought to be. There is only one thing for which we were born, and only one object, one cause, for which we were sent into the world, and that is to be witnesses to the truth. When JESUS CHRIST said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth," He spoke as the prototype of every true man

that ever lived. And therefore the question that will matter at the last, when our lives come up for judgment, is not whether we are popular or prosperous, but, How many have believed in JESUS CHRIST on earth because we were alive? How many looked on us, and said: "That man must have some power behind him. I must inquire what he has; there is Someone helping him?" Every father of a family will be judged by the influence he has had upon his boys. Do the boys look back when he has gone and say: "Ah, my father was a Christian!" Do those who meet him in business in the City every day say to others, "That man has got some spiritual power behind him; there is something keeping him so unselfish and so honourable and so straight?" If, however prosperous or however influential we may be, we have failed in that, we have failed altogether; our life is an absolute failure, because the whole object for which the HOLY GHOST was to come upon us was that we should be witnesses to JESUS CHRIST in the world. When we look to-day round the world it is a comforting thing, is it not, to see how JESUS CHRIST is winning it every day? Thousands more every day are converted to JESUS CHRIST throughout the world. We may well say to His enemies, "See how ye prevail nothing; behold, the world has gone after Him." But how has this wonderful thing been done? Not by great preachers, not by people whose names are known to the world, but by thousands and tens of thousands of witnesses of every colour and of every race, who in every part of the world have borne witness. You look up on some dark night and you see a star. What is that star doing? Bearing witness—bearing witness to the sun, telling the world that when the night is over it will see the sun. So is it that JESUS CHRIST is winning the world by thousands and tens of

thousands of witnesses in every region of life, high and low, rich and poor, boys and girls, men and women—faithful witnesses. We are bound to face this—that if we fail to be witnesses, we have failed to fulfil the sole purpose for which we are in the world at all.

Do you not see now why it is that I had to ask that question first, because if we are not aiming at that, we do not want spiritual power. Why should we? But if every one of us—and not the least the young boys and girls here who are starting in life—aim at being faithful witnesses, then we want power. O GOD, be my power; give me power to strengthen the weakness I feel; give me power to eradicate this otherwise fatal weakness in my character; give me power to be brave, not to be afraid to stand up in the workshop, in the factory, in the office, for what I know is right; give me power in prayer; give me power to be a faithful witness to the death—this will then be our prayer.

And so we come to our last question: How are we to receive this power? And of course we turn—we have a right to turn—to that early Church, that band of early disciples, to see how they received their power. And, first, they waited for it: "Tarry in Jerusalem, tarry till ye be clothed with power from on high." They did not force the hand of GOD, they did not get impatient, they waited—they waited upon GOD. And that is what I pray GOD you are doing in your hearts this morning—waiting upon GOD.

> "LORD, I hear of showers of blessing
> Thou art scattering full and free,
> Showers the thirsty land refreshing,
> Let some drops descend on me,
> Even me."

"Pass me not, O mighty SPIRIT,
Thou canst make the blind to see,
Witnesser of JESU's merit,
Let some drops descend on me,
Even me."

"We wait for Thy loving-kindness, O GOD, in the midst of Thy help." And when I find people giving up their prayers because they do not feel anything, when I find them disheartened because when they were confirmed they used to be full of warm aspirations, but now they have to go on their way feeling cold and dead, then I know that they have missed the first lesson. Wait for the power of the HOLY GHOST. It is certain to come, whether they feel it or not. It does not depend on feeling at all. If there is someone here tired, depressed about his spiritual life, let him tarry in Jerusalem; keep your head bowed between your knees as Elijah waited on the top of Carmel, and at last there will be borne on the breeze to your thirsty soul the sound of abundance of rain.

Then, while you tarry, pray—pray with all your soul. Do not merely wish vaguely for a little more spiritual power. That is not the way to get it. Pray with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. If power is to come at all, it is the most precious thing in the world, it is a thing for which to agonise in prayer, and not merely feebly wish to have. "Agonise to enter the strait gate." It is the violent who take the kingdom of GOD by force. Pray, then, with all your soul—pray in faith, and pray altogether. Remember, the blessings of a Mission are like the rain. The rain which drops upon the earth has been drawn up as mist first from the ocean; so the blessings of a Mission are drawn up by the mists of intercession first.

Then put yourselves in the way of power. That is what the first disciples did. They were all baptized, every one of them. "Except a man be born of water and the SPIRIT, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." But they were not only baptized, they were confirmed. The chiefs of the Church were sent down—you find all this in the Bible; most of you know it very well already—"and laid their hands upon them, and they received the HOLY GHOST, for as yet He was fallen on none of them." They bowed their heads for the falling of the HOLY GHOST in Confirmation. Have all of you here been confirmed? If not, why not? Put yourselves in the way of the power, as the first disciples did. But they were not content with that. "They abode in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in the breaking of bread and in the prayers." Those first disciples put themselves in the way of power by the breaking of the bread and the prayers. But you say, "Ah, yes, Bishop, I was like that once; but all that has gone from me now." How many letters I have received, during this Mission, from those who were once communicants, but have fallen away! Do you suppose a Mission is only for the good? JESUS CHRIST says that He has come to seek and save that which is being lost. And therefore—and every word comes out of Holy Scripture—"stir up into flame again the gift of GOD which is in you by the laying on of hands." Stir it up again. Those early disciples looked for times of refreshment from the presence of the LORD, times of revival, times when the power of the SPIRIT could come down upon them and freshen again their tired aspirations. I do pray that this Mission, and still more the Mission in October, when it comes, may be a time of refreshment from the presence of the LORD,

a time when down the welcome rain shall come, and tired hopes and tired efforts shall spring up again like fresh flowers beneath the rain.

And so I leave the message with you—the message which I believe in my soul is not my message, but the message of God the Holy Ghost. I ask you not to be content without power. You were never meant to be that feeble, flaccid, ineffective Christian which perhaps you are. You were never meant to be that coward, trembling at every blast of temptation, and blown about with every wind of doctrine: you were never meant to be that at all; when the Holy Ghost came down upon you, you were to be filled with power and were to be a witness. Time is getting on with all of us. Someone dies in London every eight minutes, day and night; and ours may just as likely as not be the next turn. It is an awful thing to end our lives as dead failures—wandering stars who ought to have been reflecting the sun, wandering stars to whom is reserved the mist of darkness for ever.

Come back, then, come back into the light; come into the force, into the realm of power. All Hampstead, all North London, would be converted to Christ if everyone who calls himself a Christian was really filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. And why not? There is grace enough in heaven for worlds as great as this; there is no lack of power in heaven. And if, filling ourselves with power, we go back to bear witness in that power, then we shall have as our infinite reward that people will say of us: "John did no miracle; but all things that John said of this Man were true. Now we believe, not because of thy word, but we have seen Him ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

"My hands were full of many things
That I did precious hold,
As any treasure of a king's,
Silver, or gems, or gold.
The Master came and touched my hands
(The scars were in His own),
And at His feet my treasures sweet
Fell shattered one by one.
'I must have empty hands,' said He,
'Wherewith to work My works through thee.'

"My hands were strong in fancied strength,
But not in power divine,
And bold to take up tasks at length
That were not His, but mine.
The Master came and touched my hands,
And might was in His own,
But mine since then have powerless been
Save His are laid thereon.
'And it is only thus,' said He,
'That I can work My works through thee.'"

God grant that we may feel that touch to-day!

HAMPSTEAD

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Men Only

XIV

THE OBSTACLE OF DOUBT

"Except I see, . . . I will not believe."—St. John xx. 25.

I WAS lately reading, in an excellent little book called "Gordon's Quiet Talks on Powers," a very simple but far-reaching story. There was a quiet little hamlet in America which attained the size of a great town, or a comparatively large township, by someone running a channel up to the beautiful lake in the hill, which brought them down pure and clear water. For a time that little township flourished, until suddenly, to their dismay, the water entirely stopped. People began to go away from the town, the place began to decay. They were almost in despair. And they got a badly-written letter—however badly written, it was good enough for them: "If you take out the plug eight inches from the top, you will get plenty of water." They took the hint; they drew out the plug, and down again into the little place

flowed the clear crystal stream which was the secret of the prosperity of that town. Now, that story has a meaning. I preached this morning in this church on power,* and sure enough in heaven is a reservoir of power sufficient to turn every man here into a strong, brave, believing, living Christian. And yet over and over again you find a man nothing of the sort—feebly believing, feebly living, with no power, with no influence even over his own children, holding up no example in the bank, in the shop, in the warehouse where he is. What has happened? There is a plug in the channel which stops the grace coming from the reservoir in heaven into the soul. Now, I spend my afternoons on the Sundays in this Mission going round to gatherings of my brothers in London and pulling the plug out, GOD helping me, which is stopping in their lives the inflow of grace and power from heaven. At Highgate we took "Lust." And as I name these things I have to ask, before I pass from them, Is there in any of your lives in this great gathering this afternoon any false love, false friendship, or degrading passion, which is choking the inflow of grace to your soul? If so, you cannot have both; you cannot have the grace and power of GOD in your soul and at the same time keep that dishonouring passion. In GOD's name, if it is in you, give it up this afternoon—draw out the plug. Then in St. Pancras Parish Church we took "Indifference." "Curse ye Meroz, saith the angel of the LORD, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD against the mighty." That was the curse, then, and it is the curse to-day, upon the man who does nothing, who in the most

* See p. 135.

glorious battle that ever could be fought—the battle that is being fought in our midst in London—has not come to the help of the LORD at the very moment when he might have given help to decide the battle. Last Sunday in Kentish Town we saw how the channel got silted up by "Drink and Gambling"; and I thank GOD there is a man in this church this afternoon who took the pledge last Sunday, and has kept it for the whole week. He does not know that I know it, but I do. And I pray that many who were there—for we had large numbers of men there from all the works round Kentish Town—have laid aside the obstacle which was choking their lives—drink and gambling. If there are any here who are given to drinking or gambling, the inflow of the grace of GOD into their souls is choked by that vice.

I come to-day to the "Obstacle of Doubt." You are not strong, you are not full of life, you are not living Christians, you have no enjoyment in prayer, your witness has no strength about it, because your mind is clouded with a doubt. Now, doubt is of three kinds, at any rate. There is, first of all, the honest doubt of St. Thomas; in the story of his life you have the record of an honest doubter who arrived at the truth, and arrived at it because he doubted in the right way. And there is always this mark about honest doubt: honest doubt is always earnest, always realising how terrible a thing it is to cast away the only light that every one acknowledges has ever lighted up—if it has—the darkness of the world. It is always reverent; honest doubt never is flippant about doubts, never talks about them before the boys, never tries to laugh away a friend's faith, always looks for light while it can, is ever studying, working, praying for light. Honest doubt is always doing that, and the honest doubter is never

crowned with such joy as when at last, with St. Thomas, he falls at the feet of JESUS and says, "My LORD, and My GOD." I shall say something more about honest doubt in a few moments.

Then there is shallow scepticism; and you can always tell the shallow sceptic first by his conceit; he is rather proud of being a doubter, he is rather proud of being a little more knowing than other people, he is rather proud of sneering at his brother's or sister's faith. You know him by the almost certain mark that he knows very little about that at which he is sneering. As Bacon so beautifully says, "A little learning inclineth a man's mind to atheism; much learning brings a man's mind round to a belief in GOD." The shallow sceptic is irreverent; he does not realise the sanctity of life or the awfulness of death, he does not realise what the issues are; and while he is in that state of shallow scepticism, my experience is that he will not see the light. He may be brought to his knees, by GOD's mercy, by being face to face with death; he will see, perhaps, his nearest and dearest cut down before his eyes; he will see, perhaps, his wife or his child at the point of death, because GOD will use almost any means if only He can bring the truth to a soul before it is too late. But the shallow sceptic, as he does not want the light, will not get the light.

Then, thirdly, there is the doubt of blank indifference. I remember talking to a nice young fellow in Bethnal Green. "Well, now," I said, "what do you think about religion?" "Well, Mr. Ingram," he replied, "to tell you the truth, I never think of it from one end of the year to the other." He was a Bethnal Green boy, hardly grown up. We cannot blame him; he was never brought up to anything better, but we taught him something better later on. If any of you

have given up prayer, and have come to church to-day for the first time perhaps for many years, and long ago gave up your Communion (even supposing you ever came to Communion) ; if you never kneel down and say a prayer at home, I ask you, brother, in all love, Can you wonder that the face of GOD has gone further and further from you, and that JESUS CHRIST has become a far-off figure in the distance ? and that the HOLY SPIRIT who is so strong to help you, to heal you, to cleanse you, and guide you in life, has less and less power over you every year ? and that your conscience now scarcely speaks to you at all ? Of course, you doubt ; it is the doubt of blank indifference. I have not much to say this afternoon on indifference. I do not want to repeat my messages in this Mission. I want, GOD helping me, to give a rounded message. We spoke of the awful consequences and sin of indifference in another place. I only trust—before I speak of the honest doubter, who is the man I really want to help this afternoon—that those who are doubting in a careless way, without any sense of the awfulness of doubt, will think to-day of the certainty of death, will remember that some day there will be the sound of stumbling footsteps of men carrying something down the stairs in some house or other—perhaps the one in which you live—and that that something which they will be carrying will be your body, the same body which is in this church this afternoon. That is going to come at some time for certain. One thing the living do know—and everyone admits it—they know that they shall die ; and in that moment when you are face to face with death, or when —far worse in my opinion—you are seeing your little child fading away before your eyes, think what it is you are trifling with. There was a man during my 1905 Mission in the West End who had not been to

church before for forty years. He was sitting up in one of the galleries, and I was preaching upon the text, "JESUS said, I am the Light of the world." I painted in such feeble words as I could that this was the only light that lighted up death or sorrow or pain or suffering; that if you put the light out there was black outer darkness, as indeed there is. I have read more of Aristotle and Plato than I expect many of you have; I had to read the history of philosophy in my Oxford days; but I never read a single word that I would dare to go to a dying man and read to him with any sort of hope. If I could not go and say to him, "JESUS said, 'In My FATHER's house there are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you'"; and when he looks me in the face and says, "But what proof have you that JESUS knew that?" if I could not say, "JESUS lived and died and rose again; He came from heaven, He must know"—if I have not that to say to him I could not face the dying men, women, boys and girls, whom I have had to face for the last twenty years. And, therefore, think over all that is involved in this little span of life we live here. I am not saying this is to convince you of the truth by itself, but surely it must drive you from the shallowness of conceited scepticism. At least, be an honest doubter.

That brings me to the honest doubter. I have known myself what doubt is; I have known what it is to look up and think what the world would be like if all this were a fable, and there was no GOD at all, and no revelation of GOD. I have met and spoken to hundreds in doubt, and I may say to you young men, you growing boys, here to-day, that you may expect a time of doubt in your life, when your boyish faith is passing into your man's faith. Do not think yourself

very wicked because you doubt. I remember thinking myself very wicked; I thought no one had ever doubted before, and I consulted an elder brother of mine, and he said: "Your mind is only asking a question. St. Thomas doubted, St. Thomas kept with the Church: he was not turned out of the Church; because he doubted honestly and earnestly, CHRIST appeared to him, and He will appear to you." Thank GOD, He did appear to me.

When I think over what doubts there are that haunt my brothers, and that haunted me, I think I may divide them into four heads: First, the doubt in the possibility of the Incarnation. I do not think that many doubt there is a GOD at all. But there is the doubt whether He could have come down into the world, taken on Him human flesh, lived in the world as described in the New Testament, died and risen again. The Incarnation, miracles, the use of prayer, and the good of outward signs in religion—those are four things about which I find more doubt than anything else. Let us take them one by one.

1. As to the Incarnation. Let me say at once that I sympathise with a man who wakes up to what a tremendous thing it is that he does believe. I believe that more doubt is caused by Christians speaking about their faith as if it were an easy thing than by any other means. An agnostic said to a Christian the other day (and he certainly said it with some reason): "If I believed one-tenth you do, or say you do, what a very different man I should have to be!" And I believe it is the weak and paltry life we lead, the poor result of our faith, which produces more atheism and scepticism than anything else. There was a group of young men in America, and they said to some visitors, "That is the founder of our Agnostic Club." They

turned and looked, and were surprised to see a man whom they supposed to be the best-known Christian in the place. "He is the founder of our Agnostic Club, because we know the man." It is an awful thought that some of the leaders in the church or chapel, some of us who go regularly to our place of worship, may be planting doubt in the heart of many a young man who watches us in our daily life. What if the men in the office find a Christian employer anything but a Christian to deal with? What if the foreman in the shop or the head clerk in the bank is the very one that talks about evil to the boys, as I have known happen? What does that boy think of it, or what do your children think of it? You are sowing the seeds of doubt and disbelief in that boy's heart.

But, still, the Incarnation—I come back to that—is a mighty thing to believe. Why do I believe it? Standing here as a brother man, and not now speaking to you as a Bishop to his people, why do I believe that this mighty Incarnation took place? Well, first, I believe it because I see what trouble GOD took with His world. I see that, whether evolution is true or not—and it does not make the slightest difference to our religion if it is—whether by slow development or by sudden creation, GOD took great trouble with the world, and, whichever hypothesis you may take, we men are the crown of GOD's creation. Now, I ask myself: "After working out this with so much care and trouble, would GOD have stopped at the one thing which was needed to lead His creation on to a higher level? Did He want, after all the trouble He had taken with mankind, to leave them without an example and without a guide?" He clearly had some object in creation. I know of no object why man was made at all, or why anything was made, if it was not

that so many more millions of people might sun themselves in the sunshine of GOD's happiness and share His life of goodness and glory hereafter. I know of no other reason, I can think of no other reason, for creation at all. Now, if He did that, and brought mankind to a certain level, what better step could He have taken to make us know what the life of man should be than by sending to us His Son as our example? Example is better than precept; and I say, if He could come down into the midst of us, and give us a living example in a human form of what a man was to be, our GOD would have done it. The GOD who created the sun, moon, and stars, and the beautiful earth, who gave us our homes, who gave us these wonderful bodies, this power of enjoyment, would do it if He could. Then, secondly, I find an expectation all over the world that He is going to do it. The Jews were looking for a Messiah to come; the Gentiles were looking for a great one who was to come; and, finally, a Person comes who fulfils both lines of prophecy. He looks down both lines, and says: "I am the root and the offspring of David; I am the bright and the morning star, that you wise men from the East are looking for." That He came is a certain fact of history. I find that fact in Roman history; it is not in the air. It is stated in Tacitus: "JESUS CHRIST was put to death in the reign of Tiberius." I then look at all the pictures that have been left of Him to see what His character is which is displayed before my eyes. And I am struck by this, that all the impartial historians and others in the world have accepted this character as the leading character of the world. John Stuart Mill says—and I repeat this remark because it was this that brought my friend, who had doubted for forty years, out of the gallery (he being

a great admirer of this writer) at the West End Mission —"If you want to translate virtue from the abstract into the concrete, live so that CHRIST will approve of your life." I am encouraged by such statements of absolutely impartial men to look upon this as the perfect, ideal character of the world. Archbishop Temple used to say, "He not only satisfies the conscience, He educates it." No one could have thought of anything so perfect as the character of JESUS CHRIST. Here comes the point. I look at this perfect character, so humble and so sincere, and what do I find? Even in the Gospel for to-day He is saying, "And before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." He said: "I am the Light of the world"; "I am the Bread of Life"; "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." But He says even more awful things than these: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the FATHER"; "My FATHER and I are one thing." And in to-day's Gospel, "Before Abraham was, I am"—using the name of the Almighty GOD. I ask myself what I should think of any man who used words like those. I know what I should think of it. I see a perfect character, proclaimed as perfect by everyone, humble, sincere, loving, kind to the poor, kind to children; and when with His loving eyes He looks me in the face, and says, "What think ye of CHRIST? Whose Son is He?" I answer back with my reason as well as my heart: "Thou are the King of Glory, O CHRIST; Thou art the everlasting Son of the FATHER!" And I ask you, my brothers, to think over that, to test every bit of that evidence carefully—I am talking to the thinking men to-day—and see if you can make any other answer.

2. But that brings me to the miracles. "Ah, it is the

miracles, Bishop," you say, "that are our difficulty." But perhaps you noticed this—that I arrived at my belief without saying anything about miracles. The idea that we simply throw the strain upon the miracles is an erroneous idea. We believe in them with all our souls; but they come in the second place. I say to myself: "If He was this, if on other grounds I believe Him to be the revelation of GOD, the GOD who made the world, it would be a miracle if He could not work miracles." If the Lord of Life had no more power than I have to restore sight to the blind, I should be very much surprised. I turn to the records of these miracles, and I find, pushing the account back as far as I can to the earliest documents, and the record which possibly lies behind the earliest documents, that the one thing certainly told about Him was that He was a miracle-worker. I find it taught by men, humble and sincere, who died for their faith. We find St. Paul speaking of miracles in the early Church in a matter-of-fact way as facts which no one disputed. You will find in the Epistles that signs and wonders were worked among the early Christians. I take the Resurrection, and I find men of different characters attesting it. St. Thomas was finally convinced of it; St. Peter bears witness to it, and the women, and there were five hundred people, of whom in St. Paul's day the great majority were still alive, who said that they had seen the LORD; and no doubt St. Paul spoke to many of them who had actually seen the LORD. I find a day like Sunday kept more or less well by the Christian Church. I ask: "How did Sunday come? Why did a number of Jews change their sacred day from Saturday to Sunday? It ought to have been Friday, if nothing happened on Sunday which they thought more important than what happened on Friday. The

Resurrection shed a new light on the event which happened on Good Friday." Again I ask myself: "How could this victorious Christian Church, which converts about fifty or a hundred thousand people every year, how could it have been started by a dead person?" It is impossible. When the disciples were going away to their homes, and were asking whether it was not He which should have redeemed Israel, the Christian Church was discouraged and broken-hearted. Do you suppose that a dispirited, broken-hearted Church could have converted the world? When you see a long, heavy train pushed backward round a corner, you know there is an engine pushing that train, even if you cannot see it. The Christian Church comes down the ages; I cannot see what is pushing it, but I know there must be something like the Resurrection to have started and kept moving that tremendous train. And therefore, looking at the miracles as attested and standing out after all these fifty years of criticism as strong as ever, I ask myself whether, after all, it is a more difficult thing to restore life than to give it? The greatest miracle, my brothers, in the world to-day is the existence of life. You and I believe in the existence of life, but there never was such a break in the uniformity of Nature as when life first appeared. That is the greatest miracle that ever happened. When I am told that CHRIST gave back life to the dead, I look to evidence that He raised Himself from the dead; then I say to myself: "If He raised Himself from the dead, it is a little thing comparatively to raise others from the dead." Then I bow down my head before this awful mystery of miracles, and say: "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in the world's philosophy." This power behind the veil, this power which produced the

world, flashed visibly before the eyes of men, and I have seen a sign to attest the revelation of God. Tennyson says :

> " An arm
> Rose up from out the bosom of the lake,
> Clothed in white samite, mystic, wonderful,
> Holding the sword—and how I rowed across
> And took it, and have worn it, like a king ;
> In aftertime, this also shall be known :
> But now delay not : take Excalibur,
> And fling him far into the middle mere."

It always seems to me that an arm was stretched forth at that marvellous time to show the power behind the veil.

And that brings me, lastly—for I must speak very shortly on this—to prayer and outward signs.

3. As to prayer. JESUS prayed ; that is enough for me. JESUS told me to pray. JESUS said to me : "Ask, and ye shall have ; knock, and it shall be opened to you." Why should I pray ? What if GOD wants me to work with Him, as men work with Him in Nature, mining for the coal, digging for the gold ? He wants me to work by my prayer for my spiritual gifts. My brothers, if you have come here wanting to make a new start in your religious life to-day, I say, "Pray." GOD is waiting every morning for that prayer ; there He is above the place where you should kneel, with wisdom, power, strength, and love, in His hands. And He says : " Ask, and ye shall receive ; knock, and it shall be opened to you." He cannot bring you on unless you respond. And what I do hope, as one result, at any rate, of this Mission, is that with more faith, and more hope, and more perseverance, you, my brothers, will resume a life of prayer.

4. And what about the outward signs ? Let me be

frank with you. There may be some here—there generally have been at my men's meetings—who were not brought up in the Church, or what they call the Church. Of course, everyone baptized, according to our view, is a member of the Church. But why do we Churchmen—let me speak to you for a moment—why do we believe in Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Communion? Why do we believe that GOD is always working through outward signs in dealing with men? There was a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, to be to the Israelites an outward and visible sign of GOD's protecting care. Naaman was told to wash in the Jordan, as a sign of the healing he was to have. JESUS CHRIST put clay round the eyes of the blind man, and told him to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam, as an outward sign of the inward and invisible healing he was giving him. Therefore it does not surprise us; it is exactly what we should have expected, that when JESUS CHRIST left His Church He would appoint outward signs of what the Catechism calls "inward and spiritual grace." When I take a child to the font, what do I picture? I picture JESUS there saying, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not." The water is an outward and visible sign. It is nothing in itself, but, like the waters of the Pool of Siloam, it is a sign and means of inward grace. When I come to be confirmed, or bring a boy to be confirmed, JESUS stands here. The Church does not get between Him and the soul at all. He says, "Receive ye the HOLY GHOST." When I come to the Holy Communion, it is the living CHRIST that makes that real. He Himself says—the Church does not invent it—"Take, eat, this is My body"; and "This is My blood." I listen to Him; I picture Him saying to me, standing close to me, "Here is the Bread of Life

for you to eat, and here for you the Wine of Love to drink." The rope binds the climber to the guide all the closer, and does not get between him and the guide, so these things bind us to a living, personal CHRIST. If, then, you have been puzzled about outward signs, think why you shake hands with your friend; is it not an outward sign of your friendship to him? So with the Church; these things are outward and visible tokens and signs of GOD'S loving friendship to us.

And so, dear brothers, I leave you with the words, "Except I shall see, . . . I will not believe." For GOD'S sake, never utter that word of rash blasphemy. Keep, like St. Thomas, with the Church; pray for light, look for light, study for light, want light. Be earnest, be reverent, be patient in your doubts, and you, too, shall fall at the feet of the living CHRIST, and say, "My LORD, and my GOD!" and shall inherit the blessing. "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are those who have not seen Me, and yet have believed."

HAMPSTEAD

WEDNESDAY EVENING

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. The first question I have only just received when I arrived in the vestry—"Is it possible for the will so to be warped against God that we could not turn?"

That is just the awful part which in other churches I have had to explain at considerable length. Why I cannot myself believe in what is called "Universalism" is because, while I fully believe that when self-will ceases hell ceases, yet Christ is pointing out to us the terrible danger that, if we so turn our wills to what is wrong—and, remember, every day makes a difference—we may get to such a state that we cannot turn. And that is the awful danger—"Where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Can you imagine anything more awful than the unavailing remorse of a will that cannot turn?

2. The next question is whether we shall see Christ in Paradise.

Surely we shall if St. Paul is right in saying, "It is better to depart and be with Christ." I have tried to explain that Paradise through an intermediate state is a gloriously happy place of sunshine and growth. St. Paul would not say it was better to depart and be with Christ—for Christ was present with him then—if to depart and be with Christ was not to be in the nearer and clearer presence of Christ.

3. "Will the souls of those dear to us be allowed to help us, when they go to Paradise, in our struggles here?"

I cannot dogmatically answer that question, but I think it is possible and probable that they will. St. Augustine says in a beautiful passage, "The Church above loves and helps its pilgrim brothers." And can we imagine a more beautiful task for the spirit of some mother passed away than to be allowed in some way or other, if it may be, to help her son whom she loves on earth?

4. "Will those who have passed away know what their loved ones are doing on earth?"

My answer is that, if five minutes after death—as I have already in this Mission tried to show—we are just the same as five minutes before, then the same love and the same interest must go on. How can you imagine a mother who loved her child five minutes before death with a deathless love ceasing to love that child five minutes after death? She ceases to be the same person if she does. Jesus Christ respected human ties; He gave the young man back to his mother; He respects the human ties He has created, and I believe He is always joining mothers to sons and sons to mothers in Paradise.

5. "If there is an existence after death, is there a pre-existence of the soul?"

Of course we think at once of Wordsworth's lines:

> "Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God, who is our home."

But this is a different thing from the utterly erroneous idea that the spirit that lives in our body to-day was in some other body on earth before it came into ours. That, I believe, is an utterly erroneous idea, and is not the teaching we find in the Bible.

6. "Is it wrong to pray for the dead?"

Although, quite rightly, at the time of the Reformation public prayers for the dead were banished because of the corruptions connected with them—and we must never use prayer in our public services that is unauthorised—yet, I believe, when we go into our own Liturgy, we find these prayers hidden in it. And, as for ourselves, I ask myself, Could I cease to pray for my mother if she died to-night? If I did I should cease to be myself. I should breathe a prayer for eternal light and eternal rest, just as did the early Christians. And therefore the closer we feel the Communion of Saints, the more beautiful is the other world to us, and the more closely connected are we with those in it by the bonds of love.

7. "Is not CHRIST's teaching about dress and food disregarded to-day?"

Without going into the question whether people sometimes do not use exaggerated language about that, I have always preached, and especially during the West End Mission, that we all ought to live more simple lives in every part of London. Luxury and display are absolutely contrary to the ideas and teachings of CHRIST. At the same time, it is quite clear that a man with a certain income has to live, for different reasons, in a bigger house than others; so long as he is living a modest, simple life, he is not disobeying the commandments of the Master.

8. "At the Holy Communion, do we receive the resurrection body of our LORD, the same as He had on earth after His resurrection, the same body of which He said, 'Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have'? Why is it called flesh and blood? How can CHRIST's body and blood be on a hundred Communion-tables at the same time?"

In the Holy Communion we receive the true human nature of our LORD in that spiritual state in which He rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. Although now the body of our LORD is in a spiritual condition it is called flesh and blood to show that it is the same human

nature in which He suffered. Therefore, since it is in a spiritual condition, questions of time and place do not arise with regard to it. Any difficulty about the last point is not different in principle from all the difficulties as to CHRIST's presence. "When two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them."

9. "What does it mean by 'being delivered to Satan' (1 Cor. v. 5)? and if a person is trying to lead a brother to CHRIST, how do we know that he has not first to go through some awful experience such as that described in this verse? If an unspeakable experience is necessary before a spirit can be saved, what encouragement have we that our efforts prior to the consummation will be effectual?"

The writer has not quite grasped what St. Paul meant by what he said. He meant to excommunicate. If you go into the question, here was a man who had committed a great sin; but the Christian community has not taken a firm line with regard to him—they kept him in their midst. St. Paul said, "Deliver him to Satan," which meant he was to be excommunicated from the assembly of believers and from the communion; and perfectly clearly in St. Paul's mind that implied some torture, or, at any rate, some ill-effect upon the body. You remember that in another place he says that, in consequence of the misuse of the Holy Communion, "many are weak and sickly among you." St. Paul meant that, while he had to excommunicate him, and though, therefore, he would have to suffer punishment, yet it would only be for a time, and he prayed for the salvation of his soul. And when you turn to the Second Epistle to the Corinthians you find that St. Paul himself in a loving way urges the restoration of this very man, after that he had been punished by the Corinthian Church; so that we have here an instance of excommunication and restoration in the early Church.

10. "Why do you believe that a personal GOD is the one intelligible explanation of the universe?"

Because when we look at the starry heavens above we know that there is a Mind behind it. I have often said that when you see a play of Shakespeare you see the mark of mind in the play. A box of letters could not throw themselves into a play, because there is the mark of mind in the play; so the atoms of the universe could not throw themselves into the universe, because there is the mark of Mind in the universe. Then, again, I know the difference between right and wrong. Who put that knowledge into me? Only a righteous GOD, as Dr. Chalmers said, would put into man a reclaiming witness against Himself. Therefore we know that this Being who has mind is also righteous. But I know more about Him. I know that He gave His own SON to die for me as a man upon the cross. Therefore He is loving. And if anyone is wise, righteous, and loving, such a One must be a Person, and therefore "a personal GOD is the one intelligible explanation of the universe."

11. "Now is CHRIST risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept" (1 Cor. xv. 20). The questioner points out that the son of the Shunamite woman and the daughter of Jairus had been raised from the dead before CHRIST was raised.

There is a misapprehension evidently in the questioner's mind. JESUS CHRIST was the first-fruits of the deathless life which springs from His resurrection. These other people were human—they came back to our ordinary life: they died again afterwards, no doubt. What our LORD did on Easter Day was that He entered upon what is called in the Bible "the power of an endless life." It is in that power of His resurrection that we live on for ever. And therefore "the first-fruits of them that slept" does not mean merely that He was the first that came back from the dead.

12. Next comes a question about our LORD's temptation.

Now, our LORD was really tempted; otherwise the whole thing was a mockery, and is no sort of help to us in

our temptations. But we have to notice that our LORD was tempted with things that would tempt a noble character. Some of us are tempted on the mean side, where the devil knows he can attack us; CHRIST was attacked on the side of noble ideals and purposes. The devil tried to make Him use His great power to suspend the laws of Nature. He tried to make Him win the world which He wanted by false means. And therefore, while He had real temptations, which He had to resist, as we do, by the power of the HOLY SPIRIT, yet at the same time they were temptations addressed to a noble nature.

13. "How can a person get into real personal touch with CHRIST?" In spite of regular Communions and frequent church-going, the questioner does not feel to be in touch with CHRIST.

Over and over again have I said that religion does not depend upon feeling. I am certain that hundreds of souls are perfectly miserable because they are trying to test by their feelings whether they are in touch with CHRIST. "If ye love Me, keep My commandments"; and many of us in middle life, who perhaps had warm feelings when younger, are tested in our permanence of character by having, perhaps, very little of those feelings which we had formerly; but it does not mean that we are not in touch with CHRIST unless there is some sin or other between us and Him.

14. "What about thinking of sins forgiven? Are we to forget them?"

Surely we are to remember them as sins forgiven. That is what contrition means. We may look back and see how much GOD has forgiven. Notice what CHRIST says: "She to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much." And therefore we ought to have a sense of what we have been forgiven, and have a great love because we have been forgiven so much.

15. "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of GOD." How is this consistent with the words of CHRIST,

"Handle Me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have"?

The answer is that CHRIST's body was the same, and yet it was changed. Of course, what the nature of CHRIST's risen body was is a great mystery, but clearly it was the same, yet not the same—the same because everybody recognised Him, and yet He passed through doors, and it was in some sense a prophecy of that spiritual body which one day, please GOD, will be ours.

16. "If Nature is essentially brutal, not to say cruel, and if GOD is Nature, GOD must have the same qualities."

I have often had to explain that, although we often hear of the misery of the animal creation, yet such misery is denied by naturalists. Naturalists tell us that the animals are a happy creation. We cannot explain why it should be GOD's plan that the animals should feed upon one another. We feed upon animals, as they do, but you have to remember that mankind is not unhappy because of this, nor need the animals be unhappy. The Almighty knows more about the arrangement of what He has made, and knows better what makes for the happiness of the people and animals He has created, than His critics do.

17. "I am greatly troubled by horrible thoughts."

Remember temptation is not sin. There is a smell of sin about it, and often Satan tries to make us think we have sinned. If we resist those thoughts—if we hold firm—then temptation is not sin. It is a well-known plan of Satan's to make us despair—to make us think that we are committing sin when we are really struggling against temptation. Satan casts the fiery darts, but we may catch them on the shield of faith.

I do pray that these answers, short and ineffectual as I feel them to be, may, by GOD's help, be of some light and guidance to any doubting, despairing, and perplexed souls amongst us to-night.

HAMPSTEAD

WEDNESDAY EVENING

XV

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: GOODNESS

"The fruit of the SPIRIT is goodness."—GAL. v. 22.

OF all the fruits of the SPIRIT we have perhaps the loveliest to-night—"The fruit of the SPIRIT is goodness." We have had "Love," "Joy," "Peace," and "Long-suffering," but the fruit of the SPIRIT now is also "Goodness." And I want to ask you a very straight question at once. It is only another form, of course, of a question I have asked already. I have asked upon what your hearts and minds and lives were set: did you want the power of the HOLY GHOST? Were you set upon one thing—being witnesses to JESUS CHRIST? "When the HOLY GHOST"—you remember that was our text on Sunday—"when the HOLY GHOST is come upon you, ye shall receive power, and ye shall be My witnesses." Now, the question I want to ask to-night is: Do you want goodness? Do you want it in preference to cleverness or fame, or pleasure or advancement? Do you prefer to be good to anything else? "Are your minds set upon righteousness, O ye congregation?" as the Psalmist asked. And in order to help you to answer

the question, I should like you to remember one or two things about goodness.

Goodness must not be identified with the weaknesses and infirmities of the good. You often hear people say, "He is very good, of course, but——" We freely admit that good men and good women are sometimes priggish, sometimes unsympathetic in their manner, sometimes full of mawkish sentimentality, sometimes very unbusinesslike ; and all these things are often associated with goodness, and blind our eyes to what goodness is. Goodness is not these things : that is the dross ; the gold is behind the dross. If you get rid of the priggishness, the want of sympathy, the sentimentality, which rightly disgust people, you have the pure gold ; then you would get at the goodness in the person. And therefore, because I want to make you in love with goodness, because I want you to go away to-night in love with being good, in love with it as the one thing you are going to aim at during the rest of your lives, I want to guard you from this misapprehension ; do not identify it with the weaknesses and frailties of the good. In so far as they have these things they are not good.

Then, secondly, goodness is not a negative virtue. We smile when we hear of the mother who said, "Go and see what that child is doing, and tell it not to." That is not much of a parody of the way in which some mothers do treat their children. Surely to act like that is to spoil a child's temper, and to associate in its mind goodness with unpleasantness for the rest of its days. Goodness is not perpetually saying "Don't!" goodness does not consist in not doing this or that. A purely negative virtue has no force at all. Goodness is like a lovely stream which pours out of a deep and pure lake among the hills, to carry life and strength and

brightness through the world. That is what goodness is—real, positive, energetic, energising virtue.

So, again, goodness, when we look at it in some good man or woman whom we know, is the most attractive thing in the whole world. Why is it that the whole world has gone after JESUS?—"Behold, the world has gone after Him." Because He was so good. He went about doing good. He was good in Himself. Little children looked into His eyes, and they saw how good He was, and they trusted Him; and there is no better judge of character than little children. You may be sure there is something wrong in you, my brother, if a child does not trust you. Goodness is the most attractive thing in the world.

So, again, goodness is the only secret of real, permanent happiness that there is. The good, however lonely, however tired, however much in pain, are not unhappy. We understand the Beatitudes better if we read the word "blessed" as happy—"happy are the pure in heart"; "happy are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness"; "happy are the unselfish"; "happy are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake." CHRIST is pointing to the elements of permanent happiness, and these elements of permanent happiness are elements that make up goodness. This Mission is nothing if it does not speak perfectly directly to your souls. I ask, then, Are you happy, are you really happy, or does your happiness hang by a thread? If somebody knew that thing about you which you know, and which you do not want to be known, would you be happy? Can you look the whole world in the face? can it be said of you, as it was said of the Duke of Wellington,

> "Whatever record leaps to light,
> He never will be shamed"?

Can that be said of you? Are you pure in heart? What about your thoughts? Do you really love whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report? If there be any virtue, any praise, do you think on these things? Are you meek, which means unselfish? If you look round, you see that the unselfish do inherit the earth; they are the kings and queens, they are the people whom we follow. We have lately commemorated the death of a noble woman who died at the age of forty-eight, after a splendid life of unselfishness. It was wonderful to see how the great people of the earth, statesmen and others, some of whom, perhaps, would not call themselves definitely religious men, bowed as before a queen before this perfectly unselfish woman.* The meek do inherit the earth. Are you exercising the perfectly rightful influence that you should exercise because people know you are unselfish? Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Are your minds set upon that? If it is so, then you are happy.

I pray that our service here may stir up hunger and thirst after righteousness. Are you privileged to bear a few blows for JESUS CHRIST? Are you a little persecuted down in the warehouse, in the office, in the home? Happy are you, if it is so. "Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." We should not like to meet the Crucified, and never have had a splinter of the Cross run into us. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you and persecute you." Therefore I want you to feel that goodness is a positive thing, an attractive thing, and is the true secret of lasting happiness.

Now, how are we to be good? I am going to take three illustrations. First, how do you photograph any

* Mother Cécile, who died in March, 1906.

face you desire to photograph. There are three things you have to do. First of all, you prepare carefully the plate, then you put the instrument in position in front of the person whose face you want to photograph, and then by an act of faith you trust the light to do the rest. If we want to be good, we must have the image of CHRIST photographed on our inward heart. That is what goodness means—being perfect witnesses to JESUS CHRIST, being good because He was perfectly good, and the ideal of goodness. You and I have to do exactly what the photographer does. We have to prepare carefully the plate. All my words in the Mission have been of no good at all unless we understand that we cannot possibly advance in holiness until we have prepared our hearts; and I must remind you to-night that you cannot photograph the image of CHRIST upon an unprepared plate. You must have a clean heart, a pure desire to be good; you must put away evil thoughts, evil customs, evil habits, if you would be good. Otherwise it is a mockery to come to the Mission at all. And therefore to-night (if you have not done it before) look well into your hearts. Is it not worth while being good? At any cost prepare the plate. Then put your lives in position; turn towards JESUS CHRIST; bend your whole being towards Him; meditate on Him in the Gospels as He moves before your eyes; if you have ceased to be Communicants, come back to your Communions. If you have not been confirmed, put yourselves in position to receive the HOLY GHOST, and be confirmed, as men and women have been confirmed in the Church from the very earliest ages. Put yourselves in the right position, and then you will understand why it is the work of the SPIRIT which produces goodness; it is the light that does the rest. Another rendering of this passage is, "the fruit of the *light* is goodness." The

HOLY SPIRIT to Whom we pray will take of CHRIST and show Him to us. It is the HOLY SPIRIT who, using the means of grace, brings home CHRIST to the soul.

My second illustration teaches the same truth. A boat or a ship has to sail to some beautiful land. The prow is pointing right, the rudder is turned the right way, but it is the wind that must fill the sails. You want the wind if you are to reach

> "The island valley of Avilion,
> Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadowed. . . ."

We get our ship in position, we try our best to obey the rule of GOD's commandments, we see that the rudder is right. But here, again, it is the SPIRIT that fills the sail, it is the SPIRIT that bears the ship into the land of righteousness. "May Thy loving SPIRIT lead me forth into the land of righteousness"—that is our prayer.

Then, lastly, take our LORD's own special illustration of the fruit of the SPIRIT. You are a tree planted in a vineyard, in good ground; but you have got to bear fruit; you are useless if you do not bear fruit, you are in the way if you do not bear fruit. One of the most beautiful fruits you have to bear, if you would please your Heavenly FATHER, is the fruit of goodness. GOD comes round at a Mission, and asks: "Has My fruit-tree borne goodness? This was to be a good tree, to bear goodness. Is the fruit of goodness on it?" And perhaps He says: "I have come round year after year, and I do not find goodness. Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" But a voice seems to say: "Let it alone this year also, and I will dig about it." That is

the patient, loving Saviour, who pleads for us, and the grace of the HOLY SPIRIT is given to that soul if it will have Him. The chance pleaded for and granted will not be lost, if in prayer and sacraments and earnest effort you will let the SPIRIT get to work upon you. GOD shall see some day of the travail which He has spent upon His tree; and upon you, who may be to-night an unfruitful tree, there shall bloom at last the beautiful fruit of the SPIRIT, which is goodness.

And so may the Mission, which, please GOD, will have left love in one place, hope in another, peace in another, long-suffering in another, leave goodness here. May there be in Hampstead good homes, good parents, good children, good friends, good employers, good servants; may there be from to-night a richer growth of beautiful goodness in this place. As Kingsley wrote in a child's album—and let the words be the message of to-night:

> "Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever;
> Do noble things, not dream them, all day long,
> And so make life, death, and the vast for-ever,
> One grand, sweet song."

CAMDEN TOWN

SUNDAY AFTERNOON

MEN ONLY

XVI

PRIDE

"GOD resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble."—ST. JAMES iv. 6.

WE are trying to find out in this Mission what are the things among men in London which bar the way to the work of the HOLY SPIRIT. At Highgate we took "Lust"; at St. Pancras "Indifference"; at Kentish Town "Drink and Gambling" (and I thank GOD, to my knowledge, at least one or two gave up both drink and gambling after our service there); and, last Sunday, "Doubt" at Hampstead. And now I have to deal with an obstacle which more bars the way to religion, is the secret of more immorality, of more scepticism, of more unhappy homes, than almost anything else in the world—and that is, pride. We are apt to associate pride sometimes with the aristocracy. My experience is—and I know pretty well every class equally

in London—that there is no prouder man than the best class of mechanic or working man. Every one of us, clergyman or Bishop, has to look in his heart for every sin; when he is preaching, he must ask "Is it I?" but you make a great mistake, my brothers, if you think that, because Camden Town is not looked upon as a rich district, therefore the devil may not be spoiling GOD's work in you here by pride.

And, first of all, pride is the secret of *irreligion*. I never ask a question as to any individual soul in a place where I am going to preach; I know nothing about you here except that you are my brother-men. But if there are some here who scarcely ever enter a place of worship, who have not been down on their knees for several months till they knelt down here just now, and if the reason is not one of those five things I have already mentioned as keeping man from GOD, it is probably pride. You cannot bear being laughed at for coming to Church, you cannot bear the sense of being dependent on anyone. You are quite right in being independent of men; but many make the fatal mistake of trying to be independent of GOD. I remember hearing of a boy who was asked about saying his prayers. He said: "Well, I say them at night, before I go to bed, but I don't say them in the morning, because a boy of my size ought to be able to look after himself in the daytime." That is quite innocent in an uninstructed boy; but what I believe to be the secret of the irreligion of hundreds of men is that they do not want to be dependent on GOD—"They look after themselves, thank you."

Or, again, pride is the secret—and I have found it so over and over again—of shallow scepticism. There is no one I respect more, as I have said often, than the honest doubter. If you are going now through a time

of honest doubt, if you are trying to find out the reason of things, and have just become conscious of what a difficult thing Christianity is to accept, you will find no contempt from me or from any minister who understands his business, but only help. We have been through our own doubts and difficulties. Like St. Thomas, stay with the Church ; look for light and you will find light. But that is a very different thing from shallow scepticism. And I find that over and over again the secret of the shallow scepticism of the man who repeats arguments he only half understands, who suggests doubts to the boys where he works, and laughs—I have found them doing so—at little boys who have been taught to go to Bible-class and Sunday-school—the secret is that, if he cannot have everything explained to him about the world, he believes nothing. He says, "Except I shall see, I will not believe." He will not put himself in the position taken by great astronomers like Newton, or great scientists like Professor Stokes, or the really great men of the world. They feel that they are only men, and have only finite faculties, and cannot understand all about the infinite, and they do not refuse to believe a thing because it cannot be fully explained to them. It has been said that knowledge is like a great ocean, deep enough for ships to plough through, but shallow enough for children to play in. Another man said that knowledge was like picking up pebbles on the shore of an ocean. You do not find really great men conceited—quite the reverse. But pride is undoubtedly often the secret of the shallow scepticism that you will find in London workshops and London offices. I remember once at a Mission I asked to be told of the houses of those who gave as their reason for not coming to the Mission that they were atheists. I

had a curious collection of people, but the workers had made some mistakes about some of them. One young man, I had been told, had said that he was an atheist; I went to him, put my hand on his shoulder, and said, "Are you coming to the Mission?" I half expected a curse or some strong language; but he looked up and said, "I wasn't going, but I will." He put on his boots again, and never missed a single night of the Mission. They had mistaken shyness for atheism! But there was another man I went round to see, and I said, "I hear, sir, that you are not a believer." "Oh," he said, "I am—I am a great believer." "Are you?" I replied; "I am so glad to hear it." "Yes; I am a self-believer." And therefore the more I look at it, the more I see that pride, self-sufficiency, conceit, is at the bottom of half the unbelief there is in London.

So, again, pride is at the bottom of a great deal of immorality and drink in London. You say to a man, for instance, "Now, my brother, remember, if you are to keep this pledge, and turn away from the drink, you must pray and ask GOD's help; you cannot do it by yourself"; but he says, "Oh, can't I? I tell you I can be a perfectly sober man by myself, if I want to." I have always found that a man who has started like that in his own strength on his new life, has broken down, because he is too proud, and thinks he can live a moral, straight life without any help from GOD at all.

So, again, a proud temper is often the secret of unhappy homes. I wonder whether I am speaking to someone in particular this afternoon, when I ask, "Is your home a perfectly happy one? If not, whose fault is it?" Too often we say, "Ah, if So-and-so had a better temper!" The question I want to ask you

to-day is, Is it your pride or your temper that is at the bottom of it? If you are a proud man, if you are a selfish man, thinking of self in preference to others all the time, then it is your pride, your selfishness, that is ruining your home. And the worst of pride is that it grows on a man. I always feel that I can do something, by GOD's help, with a young man who is conceited and egotistical; but when you come to a man of sixty—and I have two in my mind at the present moment—who have so much of the Ego about them that they cannot speak without bringing in "I" every time, it seems as if their egotism had smothered their good qualities, and the "I" in them had swallowed up everything else. I do ask you, my brothers, to look at your own hearts as in the sight of GOD, and ask yourselves, as I ask myself, "Am I getting more egotistical? Am I touchy, like an invalid, if people criticise me?" "Touchy" is a very characteristic expression; the man is touchy because he is all "I"; you cannot touch him at any point without his shrinking from the touch of criticism or censure. Egotism grows on you. If you let it grow, GOD help you when you are fifty or sixty!

So, again, pride does the most terrible mischief to others. It was pride that killed JESUS CHRIST. If you look at the awful week from Palm Sunday to Good Friday, and ask yourself whose hand you see in the Cross, you will see the hand of pride at every point. Caiaphas was full of professional pride. What a lesson he is to us whose business is religion! Someone said to a clergyman: "You are different from me. My danger is to make my business my god; yours is to make your GOD your business." Caiaphas was full of professional pride, and therefore he was ready to put his hand to the nail that was driven into the SON of

God. Pilate was too proud to be reported to his master. In all probability it was the fear of being reported again to Cæsar that made him become so timid, and not act up to his conscience. He knew that there was no wrong about this Person before him, but when they threatened to report him again—he had been reported once—to Cæsar, he could not stand it. It was pride that led Judas wrong. Judas is a most instructive character : he had good instincts, he went about preaching, and probably did good work as a preacher ; but what pulled Judas down was ambition. As far as we can understand, he had set his heart on being treasurer in the new kingdom ; he was full of the thought of being the great man in the coming kingdom ; he believed thoroughly in his Master's power, but he grew so impatient because Jesus Christ would not use His power to establish His kingdom, in which he was to be the chancellor, that in his impatience and ambition he betrayed his Master, and repented too late. It was pride, and a very common form of pride, that made St. Peter deny his Master—just the fear of the sneer of a maid-servant—that was all. And yet when you see a man who knows he ought to go to Church, who knows he ought to pray, afraid of the sneers of the man who works alongside of him, it is the same pride as that which ruined St. Peter. It makes him over and over again deny his real convictions, and, with a cowardly smile upon his face, pretend to be something which he is not.

And so I want you to look with me at pride to-day ; I want to look at the facts of the case. First of all, there is such a thing — let me own it at once—as proper pride. We are quite right, in a sense, to be independent, and to want to be independent. One of the things I want to have crushed out in London is the

idea that we go to Church for what we can get. I believe the mischievous association of Church and charity throughout London, the old practice of giving away doles at the church, accounts to a certain extent for the suspicion which we have to break down about religion in London. I remember hearing that a woman was asked whether she had gone to a mothers' meeting, and she gave this extraordinary answer, especially extraordinary to us who work, or try to work, these things in the right spirit: "No," she said; "we have been hard up this winter, but we have not come to that yet." She associated in her mind coming to the mothers' meeting—and a man gave a very similar answer about going to Church—with the horrible idea that you merely came for what you could get. Before you all, I should like to denounce that idea. We want *you* to give, we want to *get* something for CHRIST out of the working men. We do not want them to cadge from the Church. Therefore, the first thing I want to acknowledge is a proper pride, a proper independence; and if we do anything which saps the independence of working men, we do a great injury to the character of the nation.

When we have said that—and I quite acknowledge that self-development, the expansion of ourselves, the making the best of our gifts, is a duty—do you quite realise this second thing, that every moment you are absolutely dependent upon GOD for everything you have? It would be amusing, if it were not so sad, to see a man get up, as I have seen them in Victoria Park, and in a patronising way say something about GOD. I remember one man—he meant it quite well—who got up after one of my lectures and said, "I vote there is a GOD," and held up his hand. It seems almost blasphemy when you think that GOD is giving

us every breath we breathe ; that if He took His hand off us for a single moment we should drop into nothing ; that we live and move and have our being simply by the power and love of God, just as those trees I saw in the park as I was coming here springing into life are dependent upon sun and air. We might imagine one of the trees saying, "I will be independent of these other trees ; I will be perfectly independent of the sun and air." The wretched thing would be dead in a week. So would every man be dead in a week, dead in an hour, if the God whom he lightly patronises took His hands off him for a moment. You may sometimes have seen death, you may have seen the colour fading away, as I have seen it in only too many cases, and you know in that hour, when it comes, how dependent you are. I believe that some illness or sickness or accident is sometimes sent to us in time to tell us that we are absolutely dependent every moment upon God. I have seen in the London Hospital—every Monday for nine years I used to visit my brothers there—men with broken legs or suffering from other accidents met with in the Docks, and over and over again have I found their souls have been stirred for the first time to serious thought by the accident ; God had brought them back before it was too late.

And then, secondly, if that is true about our bodies, it is perfectly true about our souls. The proud man, the isolated man, who keeps to himself, you never find the best type of man. You find that a man, for instance, who keeps himself entirely to himself, and does not expand in fellowship with others, is not at his best, because he was meant to be a member of society, to have interests with others, to expand in fellowship. So the man who keeps himself isolated from God is never at his best. "God resisteth the proud." That is

because the proud man resists GOD. He is like a person who is shut up in a room on a fine day. There is nothing the matter with the sun or air. They are trying to get into that little dark room, but all the windows are shut and the shutters are closed, and they cannot get in. It is not that the sun and the air are resisting the darkness, but the darkness and the shutters are resisting the light and the air. And what I know about your soul, although I do not know you personally, is that at this moment you are either keeping the windows of your soul shut—with no prayer, no love of GOD, no reading of the Bible, no Church; in which case your soul is dark—it is not GOD's fault; *you* are resisting the SPIRIT, the sun, the air of Heaven—or else your windows are open, and there is flooding your soul the love of GOD and fellowship with man, and you are bright and happy and expansive; you live your life, however poor you may be, with a joy and strength in you which the world can neither give nor take away. I want to ask you, Which is it? "GOD resisteth the proud," and the proud resist Him.

And if that is the case with any of you, then I am very glad the Mission has visited Camden Town, because the Mission has got a most glorious message for you. "GOD resisteth the proud, but He giveth grace to the humble." How often have I seen a man who had no special gifts turn out to have ten times the influence of a cleverer man! How often you see a man who starts without much influence, but something gets hold of him, something expands him and brings him out, and ten or twenty years afterwards you find him influencing the workshop more than anyone else. The grace of GOD has got hold of him. "He giveth grace to the humble."

Do you ask, "Grace to do what?" Grace, first of

all, to believe. Cast out that proud devil within you which is keeping you from faith, cast out the idea that you are rather a clever man, and that it is rather a clever thing to have doubts; get that cast out of you by the grace of GOD, and then there comes grace to believe—then the wonderful story of Holy Week, if you are humble, will come home to you. When you come to think of it, is there anything more silly than pride? Can you see the Eternal SON of GOD, in command of all the angels of the heavenly host, come down, and first of all lie as a babe in the manger, and then wash the feet of Judas, and finally lie on the bitter cross? And then can you be proud of yourself? Can you be proud because you think you have a few more brains than other people? Anyone looking at the Cross of CHRIST and then being proud of himself must be a very curious man. If the Eternal SON of GOD emptied Himself of His glory, and did that for us, how can we stand before Him and the hosts of Heaven, and see Him with the marks of the nails in His hands and feet and still feel proud?

> "When I survey the wondrous Cross
> On which the Prince of Glory died,
> My richest gain I count but loss,
> And pour contempt on all my pride."

If you have not done it before, for GOD's sake look up in faith to the Cross, before you are taken, perhaps quite soon, to meet the Crucified.

And, then, you get grace to grow. What a man the HOLY SPIRIT can make of you if you give yourself to His power! You will grow like those flowers and plants which are expanding in this glorious springtime. If you really gave your heart and mind and conscience, and put yourself within the reach of the grace of GOD,

there is nothing you might not be made to become. Once let the sunshine and air come in—and there is nothing GOD cannot do with you—you would have the joy of growth.

And then you have grace to work. I was much struck yesterday by a talk with one of the officials of the Navvy Mission. He told me how wonderfully those navvies who had become missioners were helped, what grace they received to do their work because they were dependent on GOD, what grace especially to give the right answer. It is not an easy thing to go among fifty or a hundred navvies and speak to them about GOD. One man was greeted thus: "Oh yes, we are glad to see you, mate; we want to know where hell is." Without a moment's hesitation, he said, "I can tell you—at the end of a bad life." Well, now, a man like that, uneducated as he was, by the grace of GOD clearly was given each hour what he ought to say. He gave me many instances. And none of us who have to speak day after day—and I may say that few have a greater burden in London, as some of you know, than I have myself in the burden of this great diocese; I need your prayers very much—none of us would dare to do it if we did not believe that if we are humble we get the grace to do it. We can ask each day and for each need, and the HOLY SPIRIT will give us each hour what we ought to say. And He will give to each of you the grace to work and have a good influence where you work; grace to influence rightly your own boys at home, and grace to help in the parish where you live.

And so I leave the question with you. The first step is to humble yourself under the mighty hand of GOD. Nothing in the world will do until you do that. Go down on your knees as you think over what your life has been, and how often you have

neglected and patronised God; go down on your knees with me, in a few moments, and say, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner; what a sinner I have been!" And then look up and ask for grace. There it is waiting. Open the windows; the sun and air will come in. Put yourself in the line of the grace of God: prayer, Church, Confirmation, the Holy Communion; we did not invent them: they are channels which the grace of God uses to reach our souls. You can make a channel to bring to London a beautiful stream; you are not putting the channel in the place of the stream; and these are channels through which the grace flows to your soul. Put yourself in the way of the grace of God. If you do not come to Church, start from to-day; if you do not pray, begin praying; if you are not confirmed, come and be confirmed; if you have given up your Communions, come back as soon as you can be prepared.

And, lastly, use this grace. With some things, the more you use the less you have; but this is not the case with the grace of God; with that, the more you use the more you have. At a Mission once, in which I was working, there was a tailor who had not prayed for forty years. He was caught by the influence of the Mission; he and his wife came, and they became regular, devout, prayerful, and reverent Communicants; and years afterwards the Vicar wrote to me, "So-and-so remains a monument of the Mission and of the grace of God." God grant that there is some brother here who in after-years will be known in Camden Town as one of the hardest, most devout, and earnest Church workers, who will be looked upon as a monument of the Mission and of the grace of God!

CAMDEN TOWN

SUNDAY EVENING

XVII

THE COMFORTER

"I will pray the FATHER, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever."—ST. JOHN xiv. 16.

WE have already considered ways of resisting the HOLY SPIRIT, and we have considered the different works which the HOLY SPIRIT came to do. We have taken "the fruits of the SPIRIT"; we have seen, first of all, the reality of the Person of the HOLY GHOST, and why it is that we believe in the Person of the HOLY GHOST, and we have traced His work as revealed in Scripture from the beginning. Then we considered His work in convincing the world of sin. And, before I can speak on the special branch of His work we are to consider to-night, I must say this: If you are unconvinced of sin at present, if you are being deluded by the good opinion of others about yourself, if there is some hidden sin upon your conscience unrevealed and unconfessed, you must even now, in your heart of hearts, confess

that sin to GOD, or you are not ready for our Mission message of to-night. We cannot bind up the broken-hearted unless the heart has first been broken by the power of the HOLY GHOST. And even now, if you ask the HOLY SPIRIT to do His work—His first work—on you, to convince you of sin, to show you what you are in GOD's sight, then you can be ready to understand what we are to speak of to-night.

Again, we have taken the leading of the SPIRIT—"As many as are led by the SPIRIT of GOD, they are the sons of GOD"—and I think, of all the services in the Mission, I shall remember most that vast two thousand five hundred people in St. Pancras Church on one Sunday morning as we meditated upon the leading of the SPIRIT.* Then at Kentish Town we faced the question, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of GOD, and that the SPIRIT of GOD dwelleth in you?"† In the Holy of Holies, behind anything we can see, there He dwells in every one here. Then we took "Ye shall receive power when the HOLY GHOST is come upon you, and ye shall be My witnesses."‡ What sort of witnesses are you in Camden Town? How many people are believing more in JESUS CHRIST because of you? If you are not witnesses, then the HOLY GHOST has not come down upon you; if you are not witnesses, you have forgotten the power of the HOLY GHOST; "but when He comes down upon you in power, ye shall be My witnesses, and shine like stars—witnessing to Christ as the planets witness to the sun.

And that brings me to what, surely, in many ways is the most beautiful work of all that the HOLY GHOST does, and that is that *He comforts*—the HOLY GHOST is *par excellence* "the Comforter." Christ said: "I will

* See p. 72. † See p. 123. ‡ See p. 125.

send you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." And, as I look round the world, I carry you with me—do I not?—when I say that if He did not comfort He would have left undone a much-needed work; when I think over the troubles of which I have heard even this week, I know that this is a world that needs comfort. One boy of brilliant promise lies struck down by sudden illness in a nursing-home; another man in the prime of life, doing a brilliant work, has a sickness on him to-day which I fear will never leave him, or, if it leaves him, will take away all power of work. There are two young women, lately married; one is a widow after eight months, and the other after three. Another woman has her child born dead. And as these sorrows roll on to me, at the centre of this great diocese—and I rejoice that people should pour their troubles on to me, inadequate as I feel myself to help them—I look up to heaven and I say, "If there was not a Comforter sent from heaven, where should we be?" And it was because our Saviour knew this that during this sad Holy Week, before He left, He made us this beautiful promise: "It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. I will pray the FATHER, and He shall give you another Comforter besides Me, another Comforter who shall abide with you for ever; there shall be with you the HOLY GHOST, the Comforter."

We are spiritually ambitious in our Mission; I do not believe that GOD means a single soul to leave this Church uncomforted. It is not a question of merely coming here to hear the sermon, or to come round to see what the Bishop is going to say. That is not at all the idea. Religion is indeed an empty thing if that

is all it is. But I believe that God has brought you here to-night in order that not a single soul may go away uncomforted—not one. And therefore my first word is to you who are bearing some heavy trouble. You saw your child first taken ill: you were not anxious for a time; then suddenly the doctor looked grave; you saw that child before your eyes get weaker and weaker; at last it became unconscious, and then passed away. I do not know, dear brother or sister, a heavier trouble to bear than that. I have been with a working man in his room when all three of his children on Sunday morning died one after the other, in an hour, and he had none left. Or it may be that you have a terrible anxiety about someone whom you very deeply love, and this is the burden you have brought here to-day. Now, I should like to look you in the face, as if you were the only person to whom I was speaking, and to say this: that there is only one person in the world who can comfort you, and that is the Comforter. The Comforter can, but no one else in the whole world. And I want to ask you whether you have asked the Comforter to comfort you. Perhaps you are trying to kill your grief by distracting yourself with amusement or, as some have tried to do, drown it in drink, or, as others try to do, hide it under an unreal merriment. All those are bad ways; but there was One sent from heaven who has never gone back, who, indeed, as a matter of fact, dwells within you (unless you have wholly driven Him away, which you cannot have done from your being in Church to-night; there must be some good left in you)—One who dwells there on purpose to comfort you. Do you say, "Ah, that is all very well, but would God have let that happen if He loved me?" Watch during this week and see what happens to Jesus Christ.

Did He love Him? Did GOD love His only SON? Was He left without pain and without loss? Watch this week and see if any trial or desertion or any pain of body was spared Him, and then hear ringing over the Cross on Good Friday, "This is My beloved SON, in whom I am well pleased." And then stand up, if you can, and say, "God does not love me because I have got a Cross." His only SON had a Cross, and that Cross, the HOLY GHOST will tell you, if you let Him—that Cross you have is to help to make you more like CHRIST. After all is said and done, when we meet the Crucified face to face, we shall not want to be without, at any rate, one splinter of the Cross. We shall be glad to have done something as followers of the Crucified. And when a Cross like that comes to you, it is JESUS coming and saying, "Are ye able to drink of the cup that I drink of, and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" And the HOLY GHOST will give you power to say, "Yes, I am able even to drink that." Have you not found it out already? I know that I must be speaking to some whom I do not have need to convince of the comfort of the HOLY GHOST. Why did you come through that sorrow so easily? If you had pictured it to yourself beforehand, you would have said, "I cannot bear that." And what did you find? As a matter of fact, you found that GOD the FATHER put His arms around you, GOD the SON was kneeling by your side, and GOD the HOLY GHOST poured into you the balm of Gilead, with the wonderful touch that does not hurt; and you know to-day by experience the work of the HOLY GHOST the Comforter. "All ye who need a sure release in sorrow or distress" apply yourselves to the HOLY GHOST, the Comforter.

And then, secondly, there is the far more bitter

sorrow of sin; and I say "more bitter" because there is a sting about sorrow for sin which there is not in sorrow for loss—"the sting of death is sin!" We know from those intercessions that have been sent up the last week, as one of our Church papers pointed out, how deeply the Mission was going home to many souls; we know it by the sins that have been revealed, such as those of the woman who was a thief twenty years, of those who said they were possessed by Satan, or of those oppressed with terrible temptations under which they had fallen. And therefore I have no doubt whatever that either through the Mission or through the ministry of this Church there are many here who are oppressed with a sense of sin. It is getting very near Easter now, the Mission is coming to an end, and you have to-night to ask the HOLY GHOST, who has shown you your sin, to comfort you. How does He comfort you, how does the HOLY GHOST comfort the sinner? There is only one atonement for him which avails for the sin of the world, and that is the atonement made on Good Friday by JESUS CHRIST Himself. (How can we spend Good Friday, when we think of that, in carelessness and mere amusement?) But we need some power to take the blood and to sprinkle it on the door-posts; we need someone who is the "Finger of GOD" to streak it on the foreheads of those who are forgiven. And that is what the HOLY GHOST does. He is called "the Finger of GOD," and He sprinkles the blood on those who have confessed their sins, that they may be forgiven. GOD cannot bear that one of you who has forsaken his sins, and has confessed his sins, and who is sorry for his sins, should spend Easter uncomforted. And therefore to-night—or this Holy Week, if it cannot be quite to-night—take those sins, every one of them, that you

have seen—do not shut your eyes to them now that you have seen them, now that you have seen what your life is—and one by one tell them out to God. And if you cannot quiet your conscience like that, then ask some parish priest whom you trust to help you—we are here to help our people—and then, either by yourself or with his help, pray for the pardon to be brought you by the Holy Ghost.

"Restored, redeemed, forgiven"—

that is how you must spend Easter—

> "Through Jesu's precious blood,
> Heirs of His home in heaven,
> O praise our pardoning God;
> Praise Him in tuneful measures,
> Who gave His Son to die;
> Praise Him whose sevenfold treasures
> Enrich and sanctify."

Do not say it is too late. As I preach I always think of the souls who have come in from curiosity, who perhaps may not hear a sermon again for a long time. Make up your mind to-night that you too will claim this heavenly comfort; and you can have it if you are honest with yourselves.

Or perhaps it is not the sorrow of loss or the sorrow for sin, but an awful sense of loneliness that possesses the soul. I often think, as I drive late at night back from my work through London, what a number of lonely people there are in London—poor girls living alone, having a lonely fight against temptation in their places of business; poor lads living in lonely lodgings, tempted every night of their lives. I feel that what they want is a Comforter, that they want someone who will cry, "Abba, Father," in their

hearts—someone who will give them a perpetual sense of the protecting care of GOD, surrounding them with an atmosphere of GOD's presence. I cannot do it, but the HOLY GHOST can do it. The HOLY GHOST cries, "Abba, FATHER," in their ears; He reminds them of what they were taught as children by their mothers and in the little village Church at home. He gives them a glorious sense of being protected, that "underneath are the everlasting arms," and in that sense He comforts them by nerving them and bracing them to stand firm and hold out. "I am not alone," JESUS CHRIST says, "because the FATHER is with Me." I want every lad in London, however lonely, to say, "I am not alone, because the FATHER is with me"; and that the HOLY GHOST alone can make him say. Do I preach to the lonely to-night? Are there some here, as I have found in other churches, who have written to me afterwards that they were almost giving up on the evening when I spoke to them? Then I say, take home to-night's message: "I will give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever"; and in the comfort of the HOLY GHOST you are never alone.

And that brings me to the second sense, and in some ways the truer sense, in which CHRIST used the word translated "Comforter." I always feel that in a world that wanted comfort it was an inspiration that the word should be translated "Comforter" first. But yet, when we look into it and compare passages together, there is another translation which is more accurate even than "Comforter," and that is "Advocate," "Paraclete," "one called to our side to help." That is what the word means—"called to our side to help." I was reading this week an inspiring book called "Gordon's Quiet Talks on Power," and he uses in that book

three illustrations which will illustrate well the points I would press upon you to-night. They are illustration of what is meant by a Paraclete or Advocate, and every illustration may help one or other of the souls gathered here. He first pictures a scene very familiar to us in London, where a little child is trying to cross one of our crowded London crossings; and there, as the poor little thing tries to get across, a great omnibus passes, then a cab, then a motor-car. The poor little thing begins to think that she will never get across. The tears begin to come in her eyes, when what seems to her "the great, tall policeman" in charge of the crossing comes. She does not call to him, but her perplexity, the tears in her eyes, call him, and he steps forward and says, "Do you want to get across, dear?" "Yes," she says; and when she looks up, the great strong man puts his hand up, stops the traffic, leads her safely across in his protecting care. He is her paraclete, he is her advocate. She has called him to her side to help, and, because he is strong enough and has authority enough, he helps her through the trouble that was too great for her.

Now, this is precisely what the Holy Ghost has come to do for us. I may be speaking to some who are very much puzzled how to get across a difficulty which faces them, who cannot really see their way through those pressing worries in the office, or those home cares, or those difficulties about their boys, or how to bring up their children, or how to make both ends meet at home. They are worried to-night like the child—and, remember, "we are all like children lost on a dark night," as Dean Church said so beautifully, "without God." I want you to-night to call the Comforter, the Paraclete, to your side to help you. He loves to do it, He loves to go, as that great police-

man came to the little child, and see you through, not only to-day, but every day. Think of that, you worried, troubled people in this great London—that the Paraclete, the Comforter, is ever ready to come to your side to help.

Then our author takes—surely also a true and good illustration—a boy at school worried over his sum. He cannot make it come right; he wrinkles his brow, and his poor little brain gets hot. But the kind schoolmistress sees his difficulty; she comes up, sits down by his side, looks through his sum, shows him where it is wrong—"Why, you have subtracted when you ought to have added"—and the little brow becomes smooth, and he goes on and finishes the sum. She does not do the sum for him, but shows him where he has gone wrong, points out to him his way through the tangle. She is his paraclete. What tangles there are in people's lives! How many tangles have been brought to me even in this Mission! Lives, as it were, tied up in a knot, all the sum done wrong, and no one can see, any more than the poor little boy could see, where the mistake has been! That is what the Paraclete, the Comforter, loves to do. And He sometimes uses men and women to do it. When St. Paul was in a tangle, the Holy Spirit sent Ananias to help him, and he was to learn what he was to do through Ananias. And so it may be that it is some man or woman, the clergyman of your parish, some friend whom you trust, who will be used in your case. It is wonderful how He uses people. I knew yesterday, through two people who did not know one another, two men who said something to me, first one and then the other, that the Holy Spirit was giving me a word of encouragement. If you look you will find scattered up and down your life words of encouragement sent to you by the Para-

clete through other people. If any of you are in a tangle to-night, if any of you have got your sum all wrong, be sure you ask the Comforter to come and set it right for you, either directly or through other people. You must start again. I want to have every life—tangled, perplexed, and wrong—started again to-night, and with the Comforter's help you will bring out the answer right at the end.

And then, thirdly, the author takes a last illustration, which appeals very strongly to me, because I remember a day when I had a journey through Northern Europe to visit the chaplaincies which stretch through North and Central Europe; and there was one of yourselves, one of the men of this diocese, who took the whole matter in hand for me as a labour of love. He arranged everything, the trains I was to go by, the steamer I had to catch; I had no trouble, he undertook everything for me, and came as far as Brussels to see me on my way. This is the very illustration Mr. Gordon takes in "Quiet Talks on Power." Someone undertakes for you on your journey, and all trouble and all anxiety and all worry are gone, because you are in the hand of someone who knows and understands and undertakes for you.

Now, my last and glorious truth to-night is that the Comforter, the Paraclete, undertakes for us the whole thing; that those who hand over to Him the journey of life need not have the slightest worry or trouble if they really leave it to Him. He sees them through the changes, guides them as to the way, sees them through that difficulty, then the next, and when we come to death, He sees us through that too. I have no doubt there are some who are worried about the journey of life, and are anxious about it; but I believe it is because you have not put your lives entirely into the

keeping of the Comforter. Call Him to your side to help you to-night, and offer Him your life :

> "Take my poor life, and let it be
> Consecrated, LORD, to Thee."

Say, "Whether I am to be poor or whether I am to be rich, whether I am to live a long or a short time on earth, I leave it all to the Comforter," and you will have peace for the first time in your life, the peace of absolute freedom from anxiety and worry, because you are in the hands of a greater power than your own.

And so take home your particular lesson to-night, the most beautiful message of all about the HOLY GHOST ; and may the HOLY GHOST, the Comforter, dwell in Camden Town and in every heart in the place. If so, what peace will settle down !

You will say, "But how are we to begin ; what is the practical step ?" First of all, think about it. I dare say there are some in Church who have not thought about this promise for years ; they had forgotten all about the Comforter ; they have been going to all kinds of other comforts, seeking for comforts in other ways—they had forgotten the Comforter.

> "Return, O Holy Dove, return"—

let that be your cry—

> "Sweet Messenger of rest,
> I hate the sins that made Thee mourn,
> And drove Thee from my breast."

Then meditate all this Holy Week upon our Saviour's Passion, and what He bore for us. Go to church somewhere every day, if you can. If not, get a quiet time at home, so that this wonderful drama which takes place in Holy Week and Good Friday may sink

into your soul. The HOLY SPIRIT takes of CHRIST and shows Him to us, and as we meditate upon CHRIST, the thought of the Comforter becomes more real to us; the one helps on the work of the other. Thirdly, put yourself in the full power of the Comforter. Have you given up your prayers? Then begin to pray from to-night. Have you been confirmed? If not, then make up your mind to have the falling of the Holy Ghost. "Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the HOLY GHOST, for as yet He was fallen on none of them." Have you been confirmed and lapsed from your Communions? Then come back to that which was established by JESUS CHRIST Himself, to comfort and help us. Kneel down from time to time by yourself and listen for the still small voice, throw yourself upon His power, and then, if you do that, there will be this glorious thing happen, that you who have come here to-night perplexed, troubled, alone, sin-stricken, shall go back with the comfort of the HOLY GHOST.

CAMDEN TOWN

WEDNESDAY EVENING

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

1. "How do you reconcile, 'I will not remember thy sins,' in Isa. xliii. 25, and other passages, and the text, 'Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment'; 'For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing'?"

The answer is that it is those sins which have been unrepented of and unforgiven which will be brought up against us in the Day of Judgment; of those sins which have been repented of, confessed, and forgiven, God says, "I will cast all thy sins behind My back." We remember them but as sins forgiven. "He to whom much is forgiven, the same loveth much."

2. "Am I to be eternally lost because I have been an unbeliever?"

Certainly not. St. Thomas was an unbeliever for a time, but he saw the light. Christ appeared to him, and he became a powerful Apostle, probably the first missionary in India. One of the leading unbelievers in East London, who scoffed at religion, is to-day one of the most earnest and efficient workers for the Church. Therefore be encouraged; you may be one of the powers of the Church in this district, if you persevere in your efforts towards light.

3. "Is a sin committed from time to time unpardonable if it is to save another dearer than all from further sin?"

"We must not do wrong in order, apparently, to do right; we must not do evil that good may come; and you will not help in the long-run the friend whom you love by the wrong you are doing.

4. "A friend has, first of all, been in our Church and been baptized, then went to the Roman Catholic Church, where she was baptized again, and has now given up that Church because she cannot believe all that is required of her to believe. Can she come back to the Church of England?"

We have a service especially for receiving back those who have either been brought up in the Church of Rome or gone to the Church of Rome and are received back. I received back one man this week, and many have been received back in my chapel. Your friend therefore should apply to the parish priest. She will have first to stand up and repudiate the errors into which she has fallen.

5. "Is it wrong to think that some people undergo a more painful death than our LORD's, and that they suffer more than our LORD?"

The painfulness of the death is not the point. As a matter of fact, crucifixion was one of the most painful deaths in the world. The point is the effect of it, and who it was that suffered it. I often found, in visiting the poor, that they used to say, "Ah! He suffered more than I did." When you think how CHRIST suffered in the full glare of publicity, and what the pain of lying on the Cross must have been after being scourged on the back, with the sun blazing down on the wounds, I doubt whether you do see people suffering more than our LORD did, even physically.

6. "Why did GOD go on creating people when He found the first man and woman a failure?"

I have often explained that we have free will. We are free personal spirits, like GOD, made in His image. Then

we must be free to go wrong. You cannot have it both ways. You must be either like a clock which is wound up and bound to go right, or must have free will, with the possibility of going wrong. God saw that it was for the happiness of His people to have this glorious chance of choosing good and eventually living with Him in heaven. The only object of creating people at all was that so many more millions of souls might have the chance of being eternally happy.

7. "Is it wrong to wish we had not been born, seeing that one has to suffer and die?"

A person who feels thus is in a morbid state. The great mass of humanity are happy, and the great mass of the animals are happy. We have to bear sickness and suffering, and the suffering of others, which is often much more painful to us than our own suffering; but in the life of men and of animals it is perfectly clear that happiness predominates over misery.

8. "I cannot understand why God commanded the children of Israel to destroy utterly the inhabitants of Canaan."

Read Professor Mosley's interesting "Lectures on the Old Testament." He says, with reference to cases like Jael's, that God can only get out of each age the morality of which it is capable. We should not to-day say that Jael was blessed for treacherously killing Sisera; but God goes on educating the human race, and we cannot expect to find full-blown Christian morality in the Old Testament. Christ is the ideal towards which everything is working.

9. "Is the Absolution at Matins and Evensong and in the Holy Communion merely declaratory, or is it real?"

Both Absolutions are real if you put out the hand of faith and take them. Nothing in the Church is meaningless. If you confess your sins, go to the Holy Communion, and listen to the Absolution, and take it to yourself, that Absolution is a word of power to you. If you cannot by that means quiet your own conscience, take the advice

given you in the Prayer-Book, and go to some discreet minister of the Word and open your grief.

10. "I was a communicant until four years ago, when I had a great trouble. My brother was found shot in his room."

Remember that every blow stuns for a time. I have found that very often. Some mother loses her child. It is as if someone had hit her a blow on her head. The blow on the soul is exactly the same thing. For a time it seems to paralyse the functions of hope and faith and love. You have not really lost your faith, but the blow has paralysed you for a time. Wait with patience, and faith will come back to you.

11. "'Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire.' What is this fire?"

The Holy Ghost is compared to fire because it both purifies and warms. Therefore, when the tongues of fire came down, they burnt out impurity and warmed to greater zeal. In this Mission we hope to be purified and warmed to greater zeal for the future.

12. "What about eternal punishment?"

I have given many answers to this, and I must pass over some questions which I have already answered at great length earlier in the Mission. I have explained that, though it may be perfectly true that when self-will ceases hell ceases, what Christ warns us against is this, that the will may be unable to turn. I never say that any particular man cannot turn, but I say it may be possible that his will may not turn. Instead of worrying about the question, we ought to remember that when someone said to Jesus Christ, "Are there few that be saved?" He said, "Strive to enter into the strait gate yourself." Surely we can trust souls to the One who died for them. Until we die for the souls of the world, as Christ did, we need not set up to be more pitiful than He.

13. "Two friends are at enmity, but the writer desires to be friends. May the writer go to the Holy Communion"

Yes. We are only told "as far as possible to live at peace with all men," and if your mind is towards peace, and you are willing to forgive the moment you have the chance, you are not at enmity. You cannot force the other person to be at peace with you. Pray for the other as well as yourself.

14. "Why did CHRIST die, if men have to live as good a life to reach heaven as they did before CHRIST was born?"

I think that is one of those common misunderstandings about the Atonement. The Atonement was the satisfaction of a broken law. GOD can no more say that sin does not matter than a judge can say "I will let you off" to a criminal who says, "I am very sorry." Supposing a man committed murder, and then says, "I am very sorry I did it," can the judge say, "Go away; it does not matter"? It is quite clear that all standards of morality would go to pieces directly. Now, it is just like that in GOD's universe; somebody must satisfy the broken law. CHRIST was entrusted with the task of administering that law. All judgment was committed to the SON. Instead of administering the law, in which case all would have to be punished, He satisfied the broken law for us. And, therefore, what we see is something equally done by GOD the FATHER and GOD the SON. It is not GOD the SON pacifying the angry FATHER, but GOD Himself satisfying His own broken law. We are sheltered by our Elder Brother, who satisfied the broken law, just as a man in cells used to be let off for the sake of the good name of the regiment.

15. "What is meant by the words, 'He shall remember thee in the pit,' in the Old Testament?"

The Old Testament, you will remember, took a very gloomy view of death, and the Jews had very vague ideas about immortality. Therefore, in the Psalms we find gloomy expressions concerning death. It was Christianity that broke down the fear of death.

16. The New Testament, speaking of Esau, says, "He found no place for repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."

This was because it was remorse, and not repentance, that he felt. You must be careful that your tears are of repentance, and not of remorse. Esau's tears were tears of remorse, and not of repentance, or they would not have been unavailing.

17. "Do you think," writes one who has been a thief, and thinks that he or she is avoided by people, "this would be the case if GOD has forgiven me?"

Certainly; you are bearing the punishment of your sin. We were never promised for certain that we should be freed from the result of our sins. We have to bear it patiently. The man who was sick of the palsy, to whom CHRIST said, "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," did not rise up at once. CHRIST raised him for a special purpose, "that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." You have got to bear that suffering very patiently as a penance, but it does not mean that you are not forgiven.

18. I have a very interesting letter from one of our men at the men's service on Sunday afternoon, the point of which is that pain is such a difficulty.

Well, if you are in this Church to-night, ask yourself this: Is not pain often a great blessing? Is it not a danger signal? Would your wife know she had congestion of the lungs if she felt no pain? Then, again, it has a very great moral effect. I was speaking to your Vicar only just now in the vestry, and he was saying what a tremendous influence for good pain was. A hospital nurse has said that pain had such a good influence on human character that she would not do away with pain if she could. We must not feel that GOD is

> ". . . On the hills like gods together,
> Careless of mankind."

It is the blessed message of the Cross that He came into the pain and bore the sorrows with us.

19. I am asked a question about the body of our LORD. "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

This is the answer to many questions in regard to the nature of the resurrection body. The point is this: The seed in the ground is and is not the stalk. It is connected with the stalk, and the stalk is connected with the seed, but it is not the same. So the spiritual body which we shall have in the other world develops out of the natural body, which is placed in the ground; it is the same, and yet not the same.

CAMDEN TOWN

WEDNESDAY EVENING

XVIII

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT: SELF-CONTROL

THE verse in the hymn just sung which I particularly want you to remember is this :

"True wind of heaven, from south or north,
For joy or chastening blow ;
The garden spices shall spring forth,
If Thou wilt bid them flow."

We have to grow the last fruit of the SPIRIT this evening. You in North London who have been coming to the Mission will remember that we have taken Wednesday by Wednesday "the fruit of the SPIRIT is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Goodness," fruits grown on a beautiful tree. Now, the last fruit that we have to grow to-night is the fruit of "Self-control." "The Fruit of the SPIRIT is self-control !" If we could only leave self-control behind in Camden Town, what a different place it would be !

In the first place, there would be no drunkenness in the whole district. How many petitions and intercessions we have had about drunkenness through this Mission ! But if the will control the mind and the

flesh, if the man is on his horse with the bit of self-control in the mouth and the reins of conduct in his hands, the whole of this place becomes a sober place at once. If the fruit of the SPIRIT is self-control, there would be no immorality here, none of the corruption that is in the world through lust.

"Love comforteth like sunshine after rain,
But lust's effect is tempest after sun;
Love's gentle spring doth alway fresh remain,
Lust's winter comes ere summer be half done."

There is nothing wrong in the body itself. We got rid of that idea last week. The body is a beautiful thing; the instincts, the passions of the body, if controlled, are perfectly right and good. They are given to us by GOD for a good purpose, but it is the self-control that makes the difference. There is all the difference between the man on the horse with the reins in his hands and the bit in the horse's mouth, and the same man with the reins round his feet dragging in the dust. With self-control the body becomes a very useful servant; it only becomes a vile master when there is no self-control.

And so, again, if there was self-control left behind in Camden Town, there would be no evil temper in the home. I once asked a hundred people one by one what their besetting sin was, and ninety said it was their tempers. I wonder, if I went round this congregation one by one, and said, "What is your besetting sin?" how many would say, "It's my temper that is wrong." Now, if there was self-control left behind here, all that jealous temper, that sulky temper, that fickle temper, which is spoiling the happiness of thousands of homes, would all go. We should be controlled; there would be a sweet, loving reasonable-

ness in the homes of Camden Town and North London, if the fruit of the SPIRIT blossomed out into self-control.

So, again, there would be no spiritual despair. I have come to the conclusion that spiritual despair is often largely caused by what doctors call a neurotic temperament—that is to say, the soul of the person is out of hand: he is letting his nerves rule him. It is one of the truths (among many errors) of Christian science which I have often acknowledged, that the mind does have an influence over the body, and can control, more than some people have any idea of, nerves and feelings, and even feelings of spiritual despair. Self-control is what you want: you want to pull yourself together. That is part of the work that the HOLY SPIRIT will enable you to do. You do not find a self-controlled man or woman in a state of hysterics about his spiritual state, or anything else. We are sorry for those who are in this state, but we want more self-control in our religion. If we had more self-control, we should not have such wandering thoughts in prayer, and our minds would not wander every five minutes in the course of a service.

And therefore I feel, on this last night of the Mission, a very great longing to receive from the HOLY SPIRIT in greater measure myself this wonderful spirit of self-control and to show you how to receive the gift yourselves. How can we have it? As a matter of fact, when we look into history, we see that it was Christianity which first brought real self-control into the world. It was a very favourite virtue for the Greeks to talk about—this ἐγκράτεια, as they called it. We hear in Aristotle about it; but the point is that, while they could talk about it and analyse it, and tell us what it would do and what it would not do, they

were unable, in the stress of the temptations of life, to produce it. Nothing is more distressing in history than the way the philosophy of the Stoics broke down in practice. Even men like Seneca were most cruel to their slaves. Certain sins of which we do not even speak in our day were current among the ancients in spite of this *ἐγκράτεια*, or self-control. It has been pointed out by Mr. Lecky and others that the one power to grapple with human passion and produce self-control was the religion of CHRIST. What was there in the religion of CHRIST which was to produce that self-control? First, His own glorious example of self-control. I am always grateful to the Ober-Ammergau passion-play for bringing home to me the self-control of JESUS CHRIST. I think often of that kingly, self-controlled figure, buffeted, abused, provoked, betrayed, wrapped in a glorious atmosphere of patience and self-control, passing from judgment-seat to judgment-seat. Go down upon your knees this Holy Week, especially on Good Friday, and meditate on that glorious example of self-control.

And then, secondly, we remind ourselves, or are reminded by the SPIRIT, that such we are meant to be ourselves. As He was, so are we in this world, and, whether men or women, we are meant to have exactly the same self-control that JESUS CHRIST had. "When the HOLY GHOST shall come upon you"—this has been one of our texts—"ye shall receive power, and ye shall be My witnesses." It was to be witnesses to this very self-control of CHRIST that we were sent into the world; we were to be living witnesses to it; we were to be clearly controlled by a higher power than our own. If we have failed in that, we have failed altogether. This self-control does not starve our life. I believe many people think religion consists in saying

"No, no, no." Religion is a positive thing. We saw that last week. Goodness is positive—*doing* good. But, if you notice, all force is controlled power. Why does the steam make an engine and heavy train dash along? It is controlled power: if it were not controlled, it would have no force. Why is it that the vine produces such beautiful grapes? Because it is cut down again and again, in order that the power in it may be controlled. That is what CHRIST meant by saying that He was the True Vine. Never mind if you lose everything you love; you are going to produce fruit, and it is the cutting down that makes you produce fruit. And, further, the controlled life is the strong life. You will find that the man to whom people go in their trouble is the controlled man. The woman who has faith, and love, and pity, and strength of character for everyone in the world in trouble or difficulty, is the self-controlled woman. They do not go to the hysterical woman, who flings herself into a mere life of amusement, but to the person who has depth and power and true self-control.

And then we ask, Who is to give it? We see the beauty of self-control; we look at CHRIST and admire it. How are we to get it? Then comes our last message of the SPIRIT—"The fruit of the SPIRIT is self-control." It is the HOLY SPIRIT that comes down and gives you grace to keep your temper, to control your passions, to resist the temptations of drink or pride or self-will. The fruit of the SPIRIT is self-control. "Therefore walk in the SPIRIT, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." "The flesh lusteth against the SPIRIT, and the SPIRIT against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other"; but "walk in the SPIRIT, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." It is to the life of the SPIRIT that I invite you in this last message.

Live the life of the SPIRIT : begin your prayers again every morning, and pray for the power of the SPIRIT ; come every Sunday, at any rate, to your Church, whichever it is, to deepen the power of the SPIRIT upon you. If you have not been confirmed, then remember it is the Bible that describes Confirmation. After the people had been baptized the elders of the Church came down and laid their hands on them, "for as yet He was fallen upon none of them." They were to walk in the power of the SPIRIT. We want to have that power. If you were confirmed long ago, and have neglected Holy Communion, then stir up the gift that is in you by the laying on of hands, by coming back to Holy Communion. And if in ways like this you deepen the power of the SPIRIT in your life, I will tell you what will happen. The SPIRIT will work in you, and will finally produce fruit in you, and part of the glorious fruit that the HOLY SPIRIT will produce is the fruit of self-control. How glorious if the Mission left love here, peace here, joy here, long-suffering here, goodness here, self-control here ! Some of the most inspiring poems, it seems to me, in the English language, are those poems which describe the self-control of the pure knights of the Table Round, written by Tennyson. I do not know anything which is more inspiring than the life of "Galahad, selfless man and stainless gentleman," who, because he was self-controlled and ever chivalrous to the weak, is an example to the world ; and I have copied down as our last word to-night Sir Galahad's words where he describes the secret of seeing the vision that was called "The Holy Grail." He says:

> ". . . And never yet
> Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,
> This Holy Thing, failed from my side, nor come
> Covered, but moving with me night and day,

Fainter by day, but always in the night
Blood-red, and sliding down the blackened marsh
Blood-red, and on the naked mountain-top
Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below
Blood-red. And in the strength of this I rode,
Shattering all evil customs everywhere.

* * * * *

. . . But my time is hard at hand,
And hence I go; and one will crown me king
Far in the spiritual city; and come thou too,
For thou shalt see the vision when I go."

ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

EASTER DAY

XIX

THE SPIRIT THE QUICKENER OF THE DEAD

"If the SPIRIT of Him that raised up JESUS from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up CHRIST JESUS from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His SPIRIT that dwelleth in you."—ROM. viii. 11.

IT is very hard to say on Easter Day whether the surprise of it, the triumph of it, or the hope in it must predominate. We must never get accustomed to the surprise of it; it is one of the many advantages of keeping Lent as the Church directs that the sudden change from the gloom of Lent and the darkness of Good Friday to the white flowers and the ringing hymns of Easter keeps alive in us the glad sense of surprise. "Ye have a watch, make it as sure as ye can," has a grim irony in the light of what happened on Easter Day; and yet all evidence and all probability was on the side of those who thought that they had seen the last of JESUS CHRIST.

But if the shock of glad surprise is the first emotion at Easter, the next is a sense of glorious triumph; the more unselfishly we entered into our LORD's sufferings

on Good Friday, with the more completeness do we fling ourselves into His triumph on Easter Day. It seems at first almost too good to be true: every foe is not merely defeated, but annihilated; Caiaphas is only to be known in future as the unfortunate man who said that "it was expedient that one man should die for the people"; Pilate is only differentiated from other procurators in Judæa and redeemed from well-deserved obscurity, because Christian children, generation after generation, sing in that battle-cry of triumph which they call their creed—that JESUS CHRIST, their Saviour, was put to death "under Pontius Pilate"; the rest, who seemed so powerful and threatening on Good Friday, are not so much as mentioned any more, for, indeed, far greater enemies had been conquered than they. With death broken to pieces and sin beaten from its stronghold, what wonder if the mere human agents were forgotten, and that the old hymn of triumph is repeated as one of the Easter lessons: "Sing unto the LORD, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He cast into the sea."

But if surprise and triumph burst out in every hymn, and culminate in the great Eucharist which we celebrate to-day, we must not forget the Hope. This is your answer, all you who, in the North London Mission, sent up so many questions about GOD's power to save, GOD's power to redeem, GOD's power to raise from the dead—"Easter," "Easter," "Easter," is our answer. "If the SPIRIT which raised up JESUS from the dead dwell in you, then He that raised up CHRIST JESUS from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His SPIRIT which dwelleth in you."

And notice first how beautifully this Easter message follows upon and crowns the message of our Lenten Mission: "Not by might, nor by power, but by My

Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Has the Holy Spirit convicted us of sin? Has He led us on from step to step, from penitence to confession, from confession to absolution, from absolution to service, from service to heaven? Has He dwelt in us and made our bodies temples of the Holy Ghost? Has He shown Himself the Comforter? All these things we have seen that He does; then stand still to-day and see His final triumph, and His pledge of all that that final triumph means. If it was through the eternal Spirit that Christ offered Himself without spot to God, so also that same eternal Spirit crowned His glorious work on Easter Day, by some share which we dare not attempt to define, in raising Him from the dead. While we rightly think most of Christ Himself on Easter Day, we must not forget that the "Lord and Giver of Life," the Spirit of Life from God which entered into the two witnesses in the Book of Revelation—that same loving, unselfish, glorious Spirit shared with the Father and the Son the triumph of Easter Day.

Then, secondly, notice what an answer it gives to you who, "through fear of death, spend all your life-time subject to bondage." Lift up your heads, ye dying; you cannot really die, for if the Spirit of Him which raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, then He which raised up Christ Jesus shall also quicken your mortal bodies." He has given what St. Paul calls the "earnest of the Spirit" in your hearts, and the presence of the Spirit in your hearts is an earnest that, when your natural bodies die, they shall be quickened into spiritual bodies:

"Ah! new limbs are ready, kept for us in the treasury of God;
They shall not spoil the love, they try to speak;
They shall not fail our souls as these have done!"

C. Kingsley

And, therefore, let no difficult speculations, no haunting doubts, no attempts to be wise above that which is written, move you from this solid certainty of Easter Day, that, when your time comes to die, and that tired body which, perhaps, now contains in it the seed of the disease which shall one day lay it low, lies still in death, then the HOLY SPIRIT into whom you were baptized, by whom you were confirmed, who has disciplined you and taught you and confirmed you and led you all your life long unto that day, has yet one more loving office to discharge for that body which has been His temple so long—He will raise it from the dead. It was an old prophecy which expressed well the undying instinct of immortality: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither shall thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption"; and if that was proved true in the case of CHRIST, it will also be proved true in the case of a Christian. "The HOLY SPIRIT will not leave our souls in Hades; He will not suffer that holy temple, which He has inhabited so long, to see corruption for ever; the outer case may perish as the outer case of the seed perishes in the earth as the seed becomes the stalk, but the body itself shall He quicken to a life which shall never die, where it shall clothe and serve the SPIRIT in the timeless realm of life which lies beyond the grave.

And if the dying are to lift up their heads, then lift up your heads, ye mourners. What has happened to your dead? you ask this morning; they were here with you last Easter, you say, joining in the Easter hymns and looking with you at the Easter flowers. What has happened to them? A beautiful thing: "The loving SPIRIT has led them forth into the land of righteousness." It was just what they had prayed for in the Psalms time after time: "May Thy loving SPIRIT lead me forth into the land of righteousness";

and He took them at their word, and escorted them forth to be with CHRIST for ever—

> "Children, in My gracious keeping
> Leave ye now your dear ones sleeping."

But, most of all, is Easter a happy day for the contrite and the humble.

There are many who have found out their sinfulness and confessed their sins this Lent through the Mission in North London and through many other ways, but "can they persevere? can they go on from strength to strength?" That is their terrible doubt, and the Easter message rings back to them with marvellous comfort: "He that raised up JESUS from the dead shall raise you also up by JESUS to newness of life." "He that hath begun a good work in you shall perform it until the day of JESUS CHRIST." I plead, then, with one and all this morning to enter fully into the glad surprise, the triumph, and the hope of Easter Day. We are dying men and women, it is true; we are chastened, it is true, by pain and suffering; we are sorrowful often as we lose our dear ones; we are poor, and often have a struggle to make our living; we have nothing in ourselves to encourage us to hope. *But we have the SPIRIT;* we have the SPIRIT of Him who raised JESUS from the dead, and that makes all the difference, for with that SPIRIT "we are dying, but behold we live; we are chastened, but not killed; we are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; we are poor, but making many rich; we are having nothing, but yet possessing all things."

THE END

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